

HATE, HOPE *and*  
HIGH EXPLOSIVES

GEORGE FIELDING LORRE

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HATE, HOPE AND HIGH EXPLOSIVES





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HATE, HOPE AND  
HIGH EXPLOSIVES

A Report on the  
Middle East

*by George Fielding Eliot*

THE BOBBS-MERRILL COMPANY

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*First Edition*

TO

TED THACKREY,

A GOOD FRIEND AND A GREAT EDITOR,

WHO SENT ME TO THE MIDDLE EAST

WITH THE BEST INSTRUCTIONS

ANY REPORTER CAN EVER HAVE:

“WRITE THE FACTS AS YOU SEE 'EM,

WHETHER YOU THINK I'LL LIKE 'EM OR NOT,

AND I'LL PRINT 'EM THE WAY YOU WRITE 'EM.”



## INTRODUCTION

ONE dark evening in February of this year, I walked into the office of the editor of the *New York Post—Home News*, and said to Mr. T. O. Thackrey: "Ted, Palestine is getting pretty hot. I think I'd better go take a look at it."

"I think so too," said my boss. "Get going whenever you're ready, and while you're at it, cover the whole Middle East. It's *all* pretty hot—or can be, tomorrow morning."

On March 20, after a hectic four weeks spent in the pursuit of visas and letters of introduction, I left La Guardia Field en route to Palestine via London.

After thirty stormy years, the British mandate for Palestine was coming to an end. The breakup of the Ottoman Empire following World War I had assigned Palestine to British mandatory control after centuries of Turkish rule. The mandate had stipulated that a Jewish homeland should come into existence in Palestine, and Jews had commenced going there in considerable numbers. There had been Arab resistance—notably during the years 1936-1939, when 60,000 British troops had proved unable to keep the peace of the Holy Land against the Arab gangs.

The British Government of Neville Chamberlain had decided to limit Jewish immigration to 1,500 per month. But the pressures set up by the frightful massacres of European Jews by Hitler had proved stronger than the decrees of Whitehall, and "illegal" immigration had continued and after the war had risen to very high levels.

It had proved wholly impossible to get Arabs and Jews to sit down together to discuss the future of Palestine. Investiga-

tions and committees of inquiry produced only complicated compromises which pleased nobody. Finally the partition of Palestine into Arab and Jewish states had been decreed—amid loud threats of resistance to the death by the Arab states—by a resolution of the General Assembly of the United Nations on November 29, 1947. The British, for their part, had announced that they were handing their mandate over to the United Nations on May 15, 1948, and that their troops would be out of the country by August 1 of that year.

At Lake Success, the United Nations was frantically seeking to find some means of discharging its legal and moral responsibility for the future of Palestine, a responsibility which would become actual instead of theoretic on May 15 when the British mandate would come to an end. The United States had just edged away from its former support of the partition resolution of the General Assembly, and was proposing a temporary U.N. trusteeship for Palestine.

But whatever the U.N. might decree, the U.N. had no military establishment with which to enforce its orders, and there was no real prospect that it could get one. It looked to me as though Arab and Jew would be left to fight it out.<sup>7</sup> If that should happen, most people thought the Arabs would win by sheer weight of overwhelming numbers. This was one point on which I intended to enlighten myself. I was determined to see and judge for myself the fighting power of the Jewish and Arab armies.

I wanted also to form some idea of the real character of that new Arab nationalism which had arisen out of centuries of Turkish domination and had, under British guidance, resulted in the formation of the Arab League. And I wanted to see, on the ground, the real character of the Jewish community which had grown so fast of recent years on the soil of Palestine and on which so many hopes and fears were centered.

After that, I wanted to visit Iran and Turkey and Greece and Trieste, along the southern flank of the Soviet Union, where the power of the Western world, flowing through the Mediterranean Sea, met on that little-known frontier the expanding ambitions of the Kremlin.

I went with a completely free hand to write what I saw, not as a partisan or champion of any cause, but as a reporter and a trained military observer. I went to make what military people call "an estimate of the situation," with wishful thinking and emotion rigidly excluded.

A lot of columns in the *New York Post—Home News* (and other newspapers) were one result. Several broadcasts for C.B.S. and some magazine articles were others. This book is an end product.

None of this could have been done without a lot of help. I'd like to take this opportunity to say "thank you" to all the kind people who went out of their way to assist me. I wish I had room to set down all their names by way of personal acknowledgment, but the list is far too long, and anyway I'd be sure to forget somebody.

But here's one acknowledgment that is going to be personal anyway. This book would never have been finished except for the constant help, encouragement and whip-cracking of my loyal friend and hard-working secretary, "Penny" Colley, who has put as much blood and sweat into it as I have, if not more, and has typed every line of it, read every word of copy and worn herself out trying to keep her lazy boss plugging away to meet the publisher's deadline. Thanks, Penny.

GEORGE FIELDING ELIOT

New York,  
July 20, 1948





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## HATE, HOPE AND HIGH EXPLOSIVES



## Tel Aviv

*March 26-31, 1948*

"THERE she is. That's Palestine," said the corporal of Royal Marines, his face pressed close to the safety glass of the plane's window. I slid into the seat behind him and peered out. Far ahead, the incredible blue of the Mediterranean was broken by a faint line of white surf on a dun-colored beach. . . .

The only other passenger in the airplane, a British auditor bound for Jerusalem, began collecting his possessions. The Marine picked up his rifle.

"You can feel the tension way out 'ere," he said. "That's the worst of it. The strain. You never know. Yer back itches whenever you walk down a street."

He had been stationed at Haifa for six months with the Marine Commando unit guarding the docks from which the British Army would presently begin its evacuation of Palestine. He was now returning from leave at Malta, and he was not too happy about it. He patted the stock of his Lee-Enfield.

"Sixty pounds she's worth, any day in Haifa," he remarked. "But it's ten years in the jug for me if I don't turn up with her on parade. I'll be glad to get out of this blasted country."

"You'll be out by August first. That's not so long," the British auditor said.

"Before that, I 'ope," the Marine answered. "But there'll be some 'ot times in between."

"You think it'll come to open fighting, then?" I asked.

"Bound to," said the Marine. "The only way you 'ave peace and quiet in this part o' the world is when you Yanks and us

British work together, like in Trieste. We don't work together 'ere, worse luck."

"And who do you think will win—the Jews or the Arabs?" I wanted to know.

"The Jews," said the Marine. "The Arab won't stick it when the going's 'ard. It ain't that 'e lacks guts, it's just that 'e don't see the sense in chuckin' 'is life away to push a tough show through to success. 'E figgers tomorrow is another day when maybe things will be better. The Jew, 'e knows 'is back's against the wall, and if 'e loses out this time 'e might as well be dead. So 'e'll fight. Especially these young Palestinian Jews. They're tough. I don't like 'em much, but they'll fight. And they'll win."

"Fasten your seat belts, please," said the steward. "We are coming down at Lydda airport."

Below there was land—houses, a village, a road junction and the dull brown line of a railway. Off to the left, a tan-colored square building with a tower sat on a little hill—one of the fortified police stations which dot the Palestine landscape. The plane swooped to a perfect landing, taxied briskly to a stop some distance from the big administration building. The refueling truck was rolling up even before the gangway was ready for us.

"We don't stay here any longer than we can help," the steward observed. "Good-by, sir, and good luck."

I went down the gangway and set foot for the first time on the soil of Palestine.

The tension of which the Marine had spoken was evident enough from the first moment. The people at the airport were going about their work with an air of hurry. Nobody stopped to talk. There was none of the leisurely jabbering to which I became accustomed at every other Middle Eastern stopping place. Two kilted sentries of the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders walked stolidly up and down in front of the

main building. An Arab constable of the Palestine Police inspected my passport and waved me on.

I went up to the traffic counter and announced that I was a passenger for Jerusalem.

The two passenger agents behind the counter glanced at each other.

"The main road's hardly safe," one of them said doubtfully. "We're sending a car round by Ramallah. It'll probably get through all right."

"What's the trouble?" I asked.

"Oh, nothing serious, sir. Just a little routine difficulty," said the passenger agent in the soothing manner of his kind.

So I had a problem to solve. I'd had some idea that it was going to be difficult to move about inside Palestine. It is a little country about the size of Vermont, but it was divided into three parts: the Jewish-ruled portion around Tel Aviv, the area occupied by the Arab Liberation Army in north central Palestine and by the Arab groups under the Mufti's nephew Abdel Kader el Husseini around Jerusalem, and such main centers as Jerusalem, Haifa, Lydda and Sarafand, which were still controlled by the British. Nominally, British authority extended over the whole of Palestine. Actually they held only these centers and certain other posts where their troops were stationed. By a sort of tacit agreement they did not move into either Jewish or Arab areas unless in pursuit of a definite military objective, and they were far from being able to guarantee the safety of the roads between the centers they did hold.

I wanted to visit all three areas of Palestine. I had hoped to go to Jerusalem first, but the prospects did not look promising. Maybe I could go to Tel Aviv first. It is only ten miles from Lydda to Tel Aviv, but there were Arab villages on the way.

I went out to the main exit of the building. A big armored



bus was standing there, with two armored cars belonging to the Palestine Police.

"That's the convoy for Tel Aviv," I was told. "It usually gets through."

I was to see a good many of these armored busses in Palestine. They are used by the Jews for moving passengers—troops sometimes—through areas where Arab snipers may be encountered. The body and the driver's seat are enclosed in bulletproof steel, with small loopholes. Of course they are extremely vulnerable to antitank weapons or even to 50-caliber machine guns, but there were few of either in Arab hands in those days. The most formidable weapon the Arabs possessed against Jewish armor at that time was the land mine.

It's only ten miles, I reflected, and was about to ask the driver for a ride to Tel Aviv when a young man in a gray suit said quietly, "Is your name Eliot?"

"Yes."

"If you want to go to Tel Aviv, a plane is waiting for you."

So I had my first introduction to the little planes of the Israeli Air Force. They have larger ones now, but at that time they had only small single-engine jobs, not much good for bombing or strafing but excellent for maintaining communication with outlying settlements, for dropping small quantities of supplies, and for reconnaissance. I was later to find that the Jewish airmen were particularly skilled in aerial photography.

The plane into which I climbed was full—eight passengers. As I got in, another little plane landed close by.

"Your air liner was late, and we've been here so long they've got nervous in Tel Aviv and sent this fellow over to see if we are all right," my guide explained. Again the tension—any uncertainty, in Palestine, was hardly to be borne.

The air strip at Tel Aviv was not long, but it was being

busily extended by a gang of workmen as we came down. A car was waiting, and I was driven through the bustling streets of the entirely modern city of Tel Aviv to the Gat Rimmon Hotel on the water front. As I got out of the car, a distant but familiar muttering made me pause—I hadn't heard that sound for years.

"Machine-gun fire," I said. "A training camp near here?"

"No, that's the Jaffa front," said my guide. "The lines are less than a mile south of here. The Arab snipers shoot up the hotel at night sometimes: that's why all the windows on the south face are shuttered after dark, so no lights will show."

My friend Eliahu Ben-Horin, a Zionist writer and a distinguished authority on the Middle East, came down the steps of the hotel to greet me and his presence explained the plane ride and the car.

"I expected you today," Ben-Horin said, "so I asked the Agency people to look after you. Whom do you want to see, now you're here?"

"The army," I said. "That is what is going to count."

I was introduced to Reuben Zaslani, the chief security officer of the Jewish Agency. He had a livid scar on one cheek, obviously just healed. I'm afraid I stared at it.

"I was in the Agency building in Jerusalem when it was blown up by a bomb concealed in a car stolen from the American Consulate." He grinned. "First American blow in the Palestine war. We're glad to see you, Mr. Eliot. I'll have one of our top military men around to talk to you after dinner, and tomorrow if you like you can visit one of our brigade headquarters and see some of our troops in training."

Tel Aviv is an all-Jewish city. The British had for some time abandoned all idea of exercising any authority there. The Jewish Agency was functioning as a government as far as Tel Aviv and the coastal strip were concerned, even though it carefully avoided using the titles and attributes of govern-

ment, awaiting the fateful day of May 15, when British authority in Palestine would come to an end.

What will happen then? That was the question which I was asked by everyone I met. These were the days when the United States delegation at Lake Success, turning away for the time being from the General Assembly's plan of partitioning Palestine into Jewish and Arab states, had declared for a United Nations trusteeship for the whole country in order to have some legal authority which could take over from the retiring British. No one in Tel Aviv believed that this would work. Who, they demanded, would enforce trusteeship if partition could not be enforced?

But underneath the uncertainty as to what the United States and the U.N. would do there was a quiet certainty as to what the Jews of Palestine were going to do.

"On May fifteenth," said David Ben Gurion, now Prime Minister of Israel, in an interview he gave me later during my visit to Tel Aviv, "we shall set up our state. It will be an established fact. It can be destroyed only by force of arms, and we do not believe that the Arabs possess sufficient force for the purpose: neither the Arabs of Palestine nor the combined states of the Arab League."

That spirit prevailed throughout the city of Tel Aviv. It was strongest among the young people, those who had grown up in Palestine or had come there in their youth. This was their country. This was once again the Promised Land, the land of freedom and opportunity. They would live for it, and if need be they were willing to die for it.

That first night in Tel Aviv I began to question whether there could exist among the Arab peoples the same quality of determination and the same flaming spirit, inspired by an ideal of equal or superior magnitude. There seemed to me nothing in recent Arab history to suggest that this could be so. If not, then whatever might happen at Lake Success, the

state of Israel was already as good as an accomplished fact. For the life or death of states is still a matter of the will and the ability of their peoples to preserve them by arms if need be.

The bearded general officer who came to talk with me that evening was not introduced by name. At this time Haganah officers were not addressed by military titles, since the Haganah was still—strictly speaking—an illegal organization and was in fact in a sort of curious transition stage from being a wholly underground affair to becoming the organized army of an independent state.

My visitor, however, showed no distaste at being called "General." He spoke only Hebrew, so Zaslani translated.

It was quickly apparent that the general was a competent and experienced officer, and I began at once to realize that the Jewish High Command was inspired by the spirit of the offensive to an extent which I would hardly have deemed possible. In New York all talk of the military future of Palestine had centered around one question: Can the Jewish state defend its borders?

"But this idea," said General X, "is military nonsense. Here we are in the oddly shaped area assigned us under the partition plan. Our main strength lies in this coastal strip, hemmed in between the hills of Judea and the sea. The Arabs hold the high ground to the east and can swoop down on us at times and places of their own selection if we stand on the defensive. This is an impossible situation. To the north of us we hold eastern Galilee, cut off from the sea by the Arab lands of western Galilee, and connected with our coastal area only by a narrow corridor through the Vale of Esdraelon. We cannot hold Galilee unless we take the offensive to widen this corridor and establish our communications firmly. To the south of us lies the Negeb, a desert region where we have only scattered settlements, dependent on a pipe line for their water

supply. Here the problem is one of controlling the roads and guarding the pipe line by the use of mobile forces, including armor. Certainly, both in Galilee and the Negeb, we may have to stand on the defensive in some localities. But victory or defeat will depend on the offensive use of our main forces moving out from the coastal plain to deal with Arab concentrations."

That made sense to me. It was the doctrine that has been beaten into every American officer and forms the basis of the American idea of making war.

"What about Jerusalem?" I asked.

"Jerusalem is a special case, and a heavy responsibility for the future," General X said. "It lies far from our main sources of strength, and it is surrounded by an Arab countryside in which we have very few settlements. The city draws its supplies, normally, from the Arab farms and villages around it. Now these supplies have been cut off, and the food supply of the Jewish population is diminishing. We have got to do something about this, yet our striking force is small. Probably we can open the road to Jerusalem if we have to, but it would be a diversion of strength which we should not welcome."

Zaslani gave the general a quick glance as he translated these remarks. I am not sure he translated all that the general said; no doubt he feared that, in a conversation between military men, enthusiasm might reveal too much. Anyway I learned later on that at that very moment a strong armed convoy was being prepared to set out for Jerusalem to bring food supplies through to its Jewish population, despite increasing Arab resistance along the road. It was this state of affairs which had caused the uncertainty about traffic to Jerusalem from Lydda that afternoon.

"Can't the British keep the road open, General?" I asked. "Isn't it their responsibility, at least until May fifteenth?"

"They can't or they won't," the general said. "Do you know what the British strength in Palestine actually is?"

At that time, you may recall, the figure generally quoted in American papers was 100,000 British troops in Palestine. I mentioned that number tentatively. The general grinned through his beard.

"Their combat strength is between fifteen and twenty thousand," he told me. "They have a total of forty-two thousand men here, but most of them are not combat troops—service forces, medical units, administrative and caretaking people. And they're spread all over the country. So you see they can't do much at any one place."

This was my first experience of the remarkable precision of the Haganah intelligence service—the figures given me by General X later proved to be exactly right.

"But they won't let us do very much either," Zaslani cut in. "We can't cut loose a real offensive to open the Jerusalem road permanently, for example. If we do, the British will say we are disturbing the peace of the country and confiscate our weapons."

General X snapped out a couple of sentences in crisp Hebrew, giving Zaslani what can be described only as a dirty look. Evidently he had understood well enough what Zaslani had said. Zaslani smiled somewhat wryly.

"My military friend," he told me, "is like all soldiers—he thinks politicians are too timid. He says if we didn't spend so much time worrying about the British and would let him show us what his men can do, we'd have fewer troubles."

"So even in Israel we have the old story," I remarked. "The military and the civilian points of view tend to clash as a time of danger approaches."

"That's right," said the general. "And not only about the British, either."

"But to get back to the problem of Jerusalem," he went on.

"We have a sort of hostage for Jerusalem in the Arab population of Jaffa. That's right south of Tel Aviv here. Listen!" Faint explosions could be heard. "Those are Arab mortars firing from Jaffa into our outpost zone. We have Jaffa fully surrounded except for one road—the main Jerusalem-Jaffa road—which the British are holding open. They have troops and police in Jaffa, and they won't let us complete the siege ring around the city. But when they go, we have the Arabs in Jaffa like that."

He closed his big fist in a hard knot.

"How many? Sixty thousand?" I asked, again quoting a published figure.

Both Zaslani and the general laughed.

"Nothing like it," Zaslani said. "The Arabs have been filtering out of Jaffa for weeks now. Maybe forty thousand are left, and fewer every day. The British hold open the door, and they run."

We went on talking for a while about Jewish military prospects. General X kept coming back to the need for taking the offensive.

"You can't escape the conclusion, General," I pointed out, "that in carrying out this military policy, you will necessarily come into possession of much of Arab Palestine if you are successful. And that will create political problems for you."

"It will give us, perhaps, some bargaining power," he retorted.

Like most of the older Jewish officers, the general was inclined to pooh-pooh any idea of Arab military successes. I thought he underestimated the Arabs to a fault. He had been out with Wingate's raiders in the hills of Palestine during the Arab disturbances of 1936-1939, but I wondered whether the Arabs he had fought then would have given him a fair criterion for the Arabs he might have to fight now. Anyway, he was full of spirit and determination, and he understood war.

After the general and Zaslani had left, I went with Ben-Horin to Tel Aviv's chief center of night life, the Café Casit, and sat at a sidewalk table. At the next table was a man in the undress uniform of an American officer, though without insignia. I thought his face seemed familiar. When someone called him "Mickey," I recognized him as David Marcus, a former colonel in the U.S. Army, a graduate of West Point and once Commissioner of Corrections in my home city of New York. I'm not sure he recognized me until one of Ben-Horin's friends came along and introduced me to him, calling him "Mr. Stone."

I got the point and made no reference to the fact that I knew him. He talked to me very forcibly and sensibly about the characteristics of the Jewish soldier, his need for more training and better weapons, and about the offensive spirit of the whole Jewish Army. He thought the Arab was brave but undisciplined.

"He's all right in small groups," Marcus said, "but when it comes to a platoon operation Arabs don't hang together. In companies or battalions they're hopeless. They have no idea of reserves or counterattack. Even a good leader—and they have a few—can get his men, and especially his subordinate leaders, to work together only as long as he has them under his own eye. They can't seem to get the basic idea of discipline into their heads."

The following day Zaslani was at the hotel early, bringing with him a youngish man whose civilian dress could not disguise the fact that he was born to wear a uniform. In fact, in a fairly long experience with soldiers of a good many nations I have known few more soldierly individuals than Major\* Shelomo Rabinowicz, late of the Jewish Legion which fought under British command in North Africa and Italy, and now of the Haganah General Staff.

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\* Now Colonel, Israeli Army.



"The chief of staff," said Zaslani, "has detailed Major Rabinowicz to show you around while you are here, and to answer your questions. This morning, if it's agreeable, perhaps you'd like to visit the brigade headquarters and training center at Natanya, a few miles north of here."

Zaslani then took his leave, and Rabinowicz took me outside to the waiting car. In the rear seat was one of the most beautiful girls I have ever seen, very smartly dressed.

"This is Irene Broza," said the Major. "We always take a girl along when we're driving out of town."

"Why?" I asked.

Rabinowicz patted his hip pocket.

"We're required to go armed," he explained, "because you never know when you'll run into trouble with some roving Arab gang. But also, on this Haifa road, the British will occasionally set up a check post and search Jewish cars for arms. So if that happens, I just slip my gun to Irene, who has a nice big bag to put it in. The British never search women."

Both precautions, gun and girl, proved unnecessary on this drive, however. We sped northward along the Haifa road, which was jammed with traffic—the ordinary civilian traffic in and out of the busy city, plus Jewish military trucks and cars and an occasional British convoy rolling north toward Haifa, where the preliminary moves of the British withdrawal were already well under way.

We reached Natanya without incident, drove through the town and, after passing a small British encampment, came to the barbed-wire-and-sandbag guard post at the entrance of the Haganah training camp. Here we were stopped by military police with red arm bands, who would not pass us through until they had sent for the officer of the guard. The discipline—even at this first sight—seemed of a high order. Then we rolled along well-kept streets to the headquarters building,

of the hasty frame construction familiar to anyone who has ever seen a training camp.

The brigadier\* in command was a businesslike, competent-appearing officer who had commanded a battalion in the Jewish Legion. His one desire seemed to be that I should see everything that was going on in his command, and he took personal charge of showing me around. In rapid succession I saw recruits going through a hardening process on an obstacle course, a noncommissioned officers' class being instructed in location and designation of targets for mortar fire, a machine-gun class, a communications school and a pioneer group being taught how to lay road mines. Then we went a little farther afield to see a wall-scaling class and a larger group of recruits being taught how to advance by rushes and to take advantage of natural cover.

Not many of the men were in uniform, though some were. The brigadier himself wore semicivilian dress: a khaki shirt and corduroy trousers. The senior machine-gun instructor and the commander of the training battalion were in uniform, but like all Haganah officers, without insignia of rank. The latter was followed about by a red-mustached sergeant major whose cane and general air of competent ferocity would not have disgraced the Coldstream Guards. The men stood to attention when addressed by an officer, but there were no salutes.

"We'll have insignia, salutes and all the rest of the necessary appurtenances of military discipline when we really become an army," the brigadier told me. "After May fifteenth, that is. Right now, we don't use those things because the Agency wants to avoid being accused of using any of the attributes of sovereignty until it has the legal right to do so."

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\* Brigadier Don Epstein, the victor of Mishmar Haemek. I was not introduced to him by name at this time.

I visited the mess, the hospital and the barracks. All were clean, serviceable, but not pretentious or elaborate. The officers and men went about their duties with an air of serious determination. There were not enough competent instructors, but the ones who were available were making their influence felt—spreading themselves thin, as Rabinowicz put it.

The brigadier's command consisted of the training camp, with sections for recruits, for noncommissioned officers (selected men from the field units of the brigade) and a smaller group of officer cadets in training for appointments as subalterns. In addition, he commanded three battalions stationed in the immediate vicinity. I gathered that when the brigade took the field, the training establishment would continue to function as a depot for replacements.

In the operations room I was shown a map of the brigade sector, with the location of each unit carefully marked. In the next room were the intelligence files, containing hundreds of red paper folders: one for each Arab village and locality in the brigade sector or in the adjacent regions. These were quite remarkable. Each contained a very large-scale map of the locality in question, supplemented by airplane photographs—some of them quite recent—and by patrol and special-agent reports giving the day-to-day details of Arab movements in and out of the locality. "March 15—11:00 A.M.: Four men arrived on foot, three having rifles. March 16—5:00 P.M.: Eight men departed in small Ford truck, going south toward X on the paved road. No rifles seen, but truck contained two boxes believed to be small-arms ammunition." And so on. The sum total of all these reports was daily reduced to a summary of intelligence, which gave a thorough running picture of Arab activities in the whole area.

As far as the recruit training was concerned, the brigadier said, the main effort of the depot was physical hardening. Very little time was spent on close-order drill. Musketry

courses and other weapon training was given after the recruit had completed his three weeks at the depot and had been transferred to his battalion.

The standard weapon appeared to be the British Lee-Enfield rifle. There were a number of small machine pistols of local manufacture, short-range weapons not very accurate beyond 50 yards. I saw Bren guns (automatic rifles) and a few heavy machine guns. Mines and other demolition material were also homemade and seemed of good quality. Communication equipment included a number of pack sets and walkie-talkies, and radio communication was constant between all major military headquarters. There was some motor transport, but no truck-mounted radio transmitters or power plants.

The constant talk was of the need for getting in more weapons and equipment by sea. It was plain that considerable quantities of these things had been purchased in Europe, and that every senior officer knew it. The British blockade was what prevented this material from coming in. From the window of my hotel room I had already seen a British frigate steaming slowly up and down the horizon. A dozen times in that one day I was asked: "Will the British maintain the blockade after May fifteenth? If they don't we'll be in good shape in just a few weeks."

Driving back into Tel Aviv, we were stopped three times at road blocks, where passes were examined and the car searched each time for explosives. A special security order had been issued. "Some damned rumor," grumbled Rabinowicz. "It happens all the time. But you can't blame 'em. If they start taking chances somebody will sneak by with a load of dynamite one of these days and blow up half of Tel Aviv."

Irene and I went into the Gat Rimmon bar for a quick one, and were immediately asked for our papers by a Haganah patrol which was checking draft registrations of all men under

thirty-five and women under twenty-five. I felt quite pleased that my gray hairs had not exempted me from questioning.

"It isn't that you don't look more than thirty-five," said Irene with disarming frankness. "It's just that you're a foreigner and they want to keep track of such people. You might be British for all they know."

"So might you, to hear you speak English," I retorted.

"I've lived in England a long time," she told me. "I was in pictures in England. But I thought they might need me here, so that's all over for now. When your country is in trouble, you can't think of anything else. And when we've won, we'll have our own movie industry."

I spent the next day going over maps and training manuals with Rabinowicz. The field-training manual was largely the work of David Marcus. Other training manuals, printed in Hebrew, were reprints of British publications. All were well done and very thorough.

That evening, Rabinowicz took me down to the Jaffa front, where I visited the area headquarters and afterward went to one of the outposts. We walked along a road in complete darkness. Over on the southern part of the front, beyond the road gap held open by the British, a searchlight swept the foreground and blinked out. Snipers fired intermittently from the Arab lines.

"What can they hit in this darkness?" I asked the outpost commander.

"Nothing. But they love to shoot just the same. Wastes ammunition for 'em, so it's all right with us," he said. "We've got a fellow over there we call 'half-a-belt Charley' because he'll run off half a belt of machine-gun ammunition every time he sees anything that excites him. Here, I'll show you. Give me that Very pistol, and keep your heads down."

He fired a flare that soared high into the gloom. We crouched behind a thick barrier of sandbags, and waited.

Five seconds after the flare burst, a machine gun clattered into action, running off at least a hundred rounds. Where the bullets were hitting, I had no idea. Neither did the Arab gunner who was firing them.

"Over there," the outpost commander continued, pointing into the darkness where the flare had died, "is an Arab village that causes us a lot of trouble. We'll be taking it away from them one of these days."

"I'll show you how we're going to do it," offered Rabinowicz. He led the way back to the jeep and drove along the dark road to a small building guarded by a silent sentry. Jewish sentries never challenge aloud; they just suddenly show up out of the shadows with a machine pistol cocked over one arm.

Inside there was a dark corridor and then a lighted room, with a group of young soldiers gathered around a sand table on which was reproduced with great care a rectangle of terrain with a white-walled village in the center. Every fold of ground, every tree, every house was carefully reproduced. An officer with a long pointer was talking quietly in Hebrew.

"Section leaders being briefed for the attack on the village. It'll come off sometime next week," Rabinowicz said. "Pretty good, eh?"

I began to think that the Haganah was not only pretty good, but likely to be a lot better in such matters than anything the Arabs would have.

Zaslani joined us and said that he hadn't heard anything from the Agency in Jerusalem about my journey from Tel Aviv to the Holy City.

"It's almost impossible to get through by telephone," he told me. "I'll try again tomorrow."

I began to wonder if I would ever be able to get out of Tel Aviv. It wasn't safe to drive into the Arab areas which surrounded the Jewish coastal region, especially in a Jewish

car. And Zaslani was firm on refusing to let me try to ride with a food convoy.

"No civilians with convoys," he said. "Any convoy may have to fight, and we can't make the commanding officer responsible for your safety. He has other matters to think of."

"I'll take a chance," I said rashly.

"But I won't," said Zaslani. "The Agency will make application to the British, and they'll arrange for you to go up under proper escort."

Nothing happened for two days. I spent the time seeing more of the Haganah and calling on Jewish political leaders. The Jerusalem wire seemed inoperative. Then Ben-Horin suggested that I try calling the British superintendent of police in Jaffa, Mr. Flanagan, who had a reputation of being able to do almost anything.

"But Jaffa is a besieged city," I said. "You people in Tel Aviv are besieging it. You mean to tell me I can telephone from here to Jaffa?"

"You can try," said Ben-Horin. I asked the man behind the hotel desk, and in five minutes I was talking to Flanagan inside besieged Jaffa.

Flanagan could not have been more co-operative.

"I'll check with Jerusalem and call you back as soon as I can," he said. "I think we can take care of you all right."

I felt more hopeful, and went into the bar with Zaslani and two Haganah officers to wait. The talk turned to the Irgun Zvai Leumi (National Military Organization) and I asked how this underground outfit would be dealt with after the Jewish state was formed.

"We're talking about that now," I was told.

"They've got to disband," one of the Haganah officers snapped. "You can't have two military commands running a war."

It appeared that the current reports of an agreement be-

tween I.Z.L. and the Agency were somewhat premature. The position appeared to be that the Haganah staff was demanding that I.Z.L. dissolve completely, and that their members join the army as individuals. I.Z.L. wanted to continue their corporate existence, though willing to agree to act under Haganah orders if fighting started after May 15. This the Haganah would not hear of. The politicians tended toward compromise—another instance of divergence of political and military points of view.

The Stern group,\* I learned, was of different composition from the I.Z.L. and much smaller.

"They're idealists," one of my friends remarked. "Misguided idealists, but young and enthusiastic, devoted to what they call their principles. Mostly they're a picked lot, and a much higher type intellectually than the rank and file of the I.Z.L. My guess is that in the long run they will make more trouble for our new government than the Irgun."

Two more of my Tel Aviv friends came over to our table, bringing Irene with them, and the talk switched to the prospects of the citrus trade, in which both the newcomers were interested.

"We have to keep going somehow," one of them said. "It's difficult because so much of our business was done with Arab merchants in Jaffa."

"Don't think I don't know about that hole in the fence." Zaslani grinned.

The citrus grower turned red, then laughed.

"There's a fence down the street here with a hole in it," I was informed, "where every day an Arab office boy from Jaffa comes with commercial papers of various sorts, and passes them through a hole to a Jewish office boy, who in turn gives him papers from Tel Aviv offices. It's irregular, but this

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\* Or Fighters for the Freedom of Israel—the smaller of the two Jewish terrorist organizations.



whole war is a little irregular right now, and it's good policy to protect business interests that we'll want to build up when we've established our independence."

"Which we'll do when you civilians get down to brass tacks and realize that the military decision comes first," one of the Haganah officers said.

"Hear, hear," said Major Rabinowicz, arriving just in time to take in this last remark.

"We all know that," said the citrus grower very seriously.

"It won't be the Americans or the British or the United Nations which will give us the right to live as a free people," Rabinowicz said. "It will be a right which we will earn on the battlefield. When we've shown the Arabs and the world that we cannot be destroyed by any force the Arabs can bring against us, then we shall be recognized. Then Israel will be a fact. And not until then."

The hotel clerk came in and told me I was wanted on the telephone. It was Flanagan.

"I can send you up to Jerusalem tomorrow morning," he announced. "One of my police chaps will call for you at your hotel at seven o'clock, if that's all right."

It was more than all right, and I told him so, thanked him and went back into the bar to say good-by to my Tel Aviv friends.

"You'll be lucky to get through alive, riding with the British" was Irene's cheerful comment.

## Jerusalem

*March 31-April 4, 1948*

THE big armored personnel carrier came slowly over the top of a rise. Ahead the road sloped down into the valley, then rose again to another crest. All around lay the bare rocky hills of Judea, where shepherds had once watched their flocks by night. Now those hillsides were deserted by man and beast, or so they seemed. It was raining drearily. The clouds hung low over Palestine, as though in omen of a wrath to come.

The armored car behind us stopped at the crest, the head of its gunner thrust up alertly from the turret as he scanned the landscape for any hint of trouble. The personnel carrier went down the hill, crossed the valley, climbed to the opposite crest. When we had reached it safely, the armored car came racing after us, followed by the mail truck.

I was riding the mail convoy from Jaffa to Jerusalem, and the British sergeant of Palestine Police who was in charge of it was taking no chances. He had learned the hard way not to take chances. Of course there were always land mines. . . .

In the personnel carrier with me were six British constables. Two were armed with tommy guns, two with rifles; the driver had a revolver, and the sixth man sat at the rear with a Bren gun, its lean muzzle thrusting out over the tail-board.

They were silent, rather hard-bitten but friendly, these six young Englishmen, much of a type—the type which makes up British colonial police forces the world over, the restless lads

who can never seem to settle down to desk or workbench but must always be finding out what is lost behind the ranges.

"Are you glad to be going home?" I asked the constable who sat beside me. All British personnel of the Palestine Police were to be sent back to Britain unless by April 15 they opted to remain in Palestine.

He spat over the armored side plate, and shook his head.

"Not me," he said. "Things are not too good in England these days. I'd like to stay here. It's a beautiful country, and a wonderful place to live—if it wasn't for all this bloody trouble."

"Then you're going to stay?" I asked.

"How can I?" was the reply. "There'll be no place for me. The Jews and the Arabs both hate our guts. If the U.N. would organize a police force, even for Jerusalem, like there's talk of, I'd be glad to join it and so would lots of our chaps. But if that doesn't come off, we'll have to go home."

We pulled up at a road block manned by soldiers of the Arab Legion. This was my first sight of these Transjordan troops. They looked rather dirty, and their spiked helmets rather incongruous over their dark Arab faces. The driver showed his vehicle pass and started to drive on. The Arab sergeant pointed at me and said something—evidently he wanted to know why a man in civilian clothes was riding in a police car.

The constable beside me leaned forward.

"He's with *us*," he snapped. "He's British—or anyway American, all the same thing. He's not to be questioned by the likes of you. Get on with it, Bill," he added to the driver. The car moved ahead, leaving the Arab sergeant muttering.

We passed the airstrip at Qalundia, the only practicable landing place near Jerusalem. The strip extended across the road, and movable barriers were provided to block off the road when an aircraft was landing or taking off. One of the

incredible oversights of the United Nations' partition plan was that this air strip was not included in the Jerusalem "international" area, though it easily might have been, thus providing Jerusalem with air contact with the outside world.

Presently my seatmate said, "You'll see Jerusalem when we top the next rise."

We passed a road sign in English, YOU ARE ENTERING JERUSALEM, climbed a little slope and the Holy City lay spread out before us under the pall of the rain clouds.

It was my first sight of the city for which so much blood has been shed, and around which the traditions and the prayers of three great faiths center so closely.

To see it thus, from an armored fighting vehicle, guarded by weapons which alone could have destroyed the army of Nebuchadnezzar or one of Vespasian's legions, gave me a queer feeling in the pit of my stomach.

Two turreted armored cars, manned by soldiers in the blue berets of the Life Guards, came racing up, blocking the road. There was a hurried exchange of words between them and our driver; the armored cars backed away, we went on. Ten minutes later, pulling up a steep narrow street curiously named "Queen Melisande's Way," we rolled into the courtyard of police headquarters.

"I'll go inside for orders," the sergeant called out, jumping from the mail truck. "You chaps wait here."

He was out again in five minutes.

"You're to take this gentleman to the Public Information Office," he directed. As he spoke, a flurry of rifle firing broke out in the street outside—some forty or fifty shots in all, spattering through several minutes. Our driver was calmly speaking into his radio.

"Number fifty-three," he said, "proceeding now from headquarters to Peter Item Oboe and returning."

He started his motor.

"But this shooting?" I asked.

The constables all laughed.

"They won't shoot at us," the Bren gunner said. "Not bloody likely."

He cocked his weapon as he spoke.

Out in the street, people were just coming out of doorways, looking nervously here and there, as we turned into the main road. There was no more shooting.

We rolled down King George Avenue and pulled up at a six-story building—the David Building, housing the press center, the Public Information Office and other offices of the Palestine Government. Just in front was a sandbag and barbed-wire road block, guarded by young soldiers of the Warwickshire Regiment.

One of the constables went in with me, we ascended to the fifth floor and I was turned over to "Dickie" Stubbs, the head of the P.I.O., a friendly and helpful young man who ran rapidly through the formalities of getting me a press pass and led me out to the balcony.

"You might like to get a look at the Old City," he said.

Directly in front of the building was a deep depression. At one end of the depression was the railway station. Down in the hollow, crowded houses were jammed close together. On the farther side, looking down on this huddle, rose the walls of the Old City. A vagrant sunbeam, breaking through the clouds, glinted for a moment on the dome of the Mosque of Omar inside the walls.

"That's the Jaffa Gate," said Dickie, pointing to an opening in the wall. "Those houses down below are the Yemin Moshe—it's a Jewish quarter, full of snipers. That road over there just below the wall is the main road to Hebron. We have a hell of a time to keep the Jews from shooting up Arab traffic on that road. Now look there, right across the street."

I looked, and saw a clumsy wooden road barrier, hinged to

an upright at one end. It barred a muddy road which turned off from the main street and ran over the lip of the hill down into the Yemin Moshe. A soldier in khaki guarded it. Along the road an armored bus sloshed through the mud.

"That's a Haganah post," Dickie said. "It guards the entrance to the Yemin Moshe. The Jews travel back and forth, when they have to, in those armored affairs."

All of this was going on not two hundred yards from the Warwick guard post. I expressed some surprise.

Dickie shrugged his shoulders.

"We can't do everything with twenty-five hundred men," he said. "We keep our security zones safe, and we do what we can to prevent Arabs and Jews from starting any serious fighting. That's about our limit. For the rest, they run their own affairs, each in his own part of the city. It's a pretty mixed bag. There's Government House, where the High Commissioner lives," he went on, pointing to a distant building on a hill with a flag floating over it. "Sir Alan will see you at five o'clock. Meanwhile you'd perhaps like to go downstairs and meet some of the correspondents. They've a sort of press room and a bar down there."

I found the bar well patronized. Dick Mowrer of my own paper, Farnsworth Fowle of C.B.S. and Johnny Donovan of N.B.C. with his famous dog Timoshenko hailed me with offers of refreshments. I was reminded that Timoshenko had been the cause of an international incident at the same Government House where I was to visit that afternoon; the High Commissioner had given a buffet supper at which the press was to meet the members of the Anglo-American Commission of Inquiry, and Timoshenko, sneaking in behind his master, had got into the supper room and wolfed down about half the food.

"They've put you up at the Salvia Hotel," Mowrer informed me. "It's not bad—just a couple of blocks from here,

on the edge of the Jewish zone, and right across the street from the Military Courts Building. So it ought to be pretty safe."

We drove to the hotel—up a hill, along a street divided down the middle by barbed wire (guarding a special residential area) and past a listless Jewish sentry from the local Home Guard. The Military Courts Building was under guard of an Arab Legion detachment. The small white Salvia Hotel stood directly opposite. I was to see it again under somewhat different conditions. Now it was quiet and peaceful. I was warmly welcomed by Mme. Annie Katz, the cheerful French landlady. "No heat," she said, "and alas, no hot water, for we have no kerosene for the boiler. But we will do our best to make you comfortable."

I was kindly received at Government House by the High Commissioner, Sir Alan Cunningham, who was so soon to lay down his authority as the representative of British mandatory rule in Palestine.

Sir Alan said at once that he had lost all hope of preventing an outbreak of fighting between Jews and Arabs after British authority was ended. "They'll have to fight it out," he said. "But I do hope that something can be done to save Jerusalem. The situation here is confused, with Jews and Arabs scattered all over the place, and if a fight begins in Jerusalem the results may be rather horrible. It's a matter in which the consciences of Christians, as well as Jews and Moslems, should be extremely sensitive."

"Do you think there is any possibility of working out a truce for the Jerusalem area, Sir Alan?" I asked.

He nodded emphatically.

"I'm sure the Jews would agree," he told me, "and I have hopes of getting the Arabs to agree. But the United Nations have to take the initiative, and they've got to provide a small force to police the city. I think a thousand men would do.

The numbers don't matter so much as the display of U.N. authority. There isn't much time left to make the necessary preparations."

Sir Alan struck me as a conscientious and sincere man who has been doing his best, with diminishing authority and in a situation in which both sides blame the British for everything. He was rather annoyed when I hinted that some Jewish officers felt they were being hampered in their efforts by the presence of British forces who sometimes confiscated their weapons.

"They'd be far worse off if we weren't here to protect them," he said. "Look at this convoy they tried to run out to Kfar Etzion a day or so ago. They'd have been wiped out if it hadn't been for British troops intervening and saving their lives."

This last was quite true. The Jewish convoy commander, taking food and ammunition to the beleaguered settlement, had mismanaged his convoy, wasted too much time in the turnaround, and found the road blocked on his return to Jerusalem. Arab fighters under Abdel Kader el Husseini, swarming down from their villages, had surrounded the convoy in overwhelming strength, and would have massacred the whole of the Jewish force if a British detachment had not interfered.

"Even so," Sir Alan went on, "the best we could do was to get the Jews off with their lives. We had only forty men to spare for that job."

He leaned back in his chair and sighed.

"I hate to pull out and leave this country to chaos," he said. "But go we must and go we will. There is nothing else for us to do."

"The Jewish press and the Arab press both say you haven't any real intention of leaving, that you're scheming to remain on some pretext," I needed.



Sir Alan barked one short laugh. "What did they tell you about that in London?" he asked.

"That no British Government could remain in office an hour which proposed any such thing," I said. "I must say I agree. It's not only Parliament, but the temper of the British people. They're fed up with having their boys shot in Palestine, and they want no more of it. But you can't make people here see that."

"I know," said Sir Alan rather wearily. "They're too anxious to twist and turn every little occurrence to serve propaganda ends. It wouldn't do for either side to attribute the least good faith or honesty of purpose to me or to my government. But I do hope we can get something done about Jerusalem."

When I left, Sir Alan walked to the door with me through the beautiful corridors of Government House. "What will happen to this house?" he wondered. "It's become home to me."

I drove back to the city in the gathering dusk, and found Major Bob Allen, the army public relations officer, waiting for me at the P.I.O. He took me over to the quarters of the general officer commanding, Lieutenant General Gordon H. A. MacMillan, a tall rangy Scot with light-blue eyes and a straightforward, friendly manner.

"Glad to see you. Have a drink. Come on in here and we'll spread out the maps and tell you how things stand," said the general.

The maps were laid on the floor, and the general proceeded to explain his situation.

"First thing you should understand, Eliot," he began, "is that I'm spread damned thin—so thin that if I had to use a couple of battalions to meet an emergency situation anywhere in Palestine I'd first have to decide what other part of this country I was going to let go to hell."

He leaned over and stabbed a finger at the north.

"Up there," he said, "I've got the Irish Guards, keeping open the road north of Lake Tiberias. That road is the life line of a whole string of Jewish settlements, and the Arabs attack Jewish vehicles there whenever they can. There are small troubles there almost every day. Ice? You Americans always like ice."

He dropped a couple of cubes in my glass, and sipped from his own.

"Just last week," he said in a casual tone, "there was a fight and a couple of wounded Arabs were left on the road. One of our patrols found them and packed them off to Tiberias in an ambulance. Down the road a mile or two, about fifty of these Irgun chaps popped out of the bushes and held up the ambulance. There was only the driver and one R.A.M.C. orderly with it, so they didn't put up a fight. The Jews carried off the two wounded Arabs. We didn't like that very well, and my colonel told the local Jewish people that we expected to get those Arabs back. So we got them back."

He took another pull at his glass.

"One of them," he went on, "was still warm. He had a tag attached to him saying he'd been tried by court-martial and shot for crimes unspecified. The other one was alive. He had one eye gouged out, his left arm broken, and sugar had been injected into his blood."

A cold shiver ran down my spine.

"That was the Irgun, remember," said MacMillan. "The Haganah doesn't play games of that sort. But the Arabs are just as bad."

The general gestured toward another part of the map.

"Now there's Haifa," he continued. "That's my port of embarkation. I've got rather a strong force there. Then there's the railway and the main highway between Haifa and Jerusalem. We've got to keep that open, so we're guarding

it. I've had to put an extra battalion on that job. The Irgun and the Stern gang have been blowing up trains. Then there is the stores depot at Sarafand, the airport at Lydda and the Jaffa business where I've got to keep the Jews from starving out forty or fifty thousand Arabs. I have the Lincolns and a battalion of my old regiment, the Argylls, attending to those chores. Finally, I have three battalions, a few tanks and a battery of twenty-five-pounders here in Jerusalem. And that's the lot, except for a few scattered outfits—largely service people and what-not—and a small armored force in the south which is doing what it can to keep open the roads to the Jewish settlements in the Negeb."

"I agree you're spread thin, General," I said. "I suppose your plans are all set for your withdrawal after May fifteenth?"

"Not only set, but very well advanced," MacMillan told me. "A lot of troops and a vast amount of stores have been sent out of the country already, mostly through Haifa, though some have gone by train to Egypt. After May fifteenth I'm going to speed up the withdrawal program as fast as I can. My sole object then will be to get my people out of here without casualties and as rapidly as possible."

"You don't think it will take you until August first to do the job?"

"Nowhere nearly that long," the general assured me.

"Do you expect general fighting to break out between the Jews and the Arabs?" I asked.

"Of course," the general said. "There can be no stopping it—and it won't be my business to stop it unless my forces are interfered with: in which case somebody is going to get hurt."

At this point the chief of staff, Brigadier Kirkman, and Colonel Norman, the intelligence officer, came in.

I asked about the possibility of a truce for Jerusalem.

MacMillan said with some enthusiasm that he hoped very

much it would be possible. I tentatively mentioned the High Commissioner's estimate of a thousand men as an adequate U.N. police force.

"Two thousand or twenty-five hundred would be more like it," Kirkman said. "You not only would have to police Jerusalem itself, but you would also have to guard food convoys coming up from the coast, and the water supply which comes by pipe line from Ras el Ain, about thirty kilometers from the city."

"A minimum of two hundred tons a day would be needed for food alone for the city's population," he added.

"But it can be done and it ought to be done," MacMillan insisted. "Those people at Lake Success ought to be working on the thing right now. A peaceful Jerusalem under the U.N. flag would be a stabilizing influence on the whole country."

My impression of the general, as I took my leave of him a little later, was that of a competent and firm-minded soldier with perhaps a clearer grasp of the essentials of the situation—a situation fundamentally military in nature—than most Britishers with whom I had talked, whether in New York, London or Palestine. I wondered how much his advice was heeded by his superiors in England. I had occasion to reflect on that mental question rather bitterly later on.

The next day I went to call on Sir Henry Gurney, the chief secretary of the Palestine Government, a man considerably embittered by the wrecking of what he regarded as a first-class job of colonial administration. I found, however, little in his words or manner to support the charges of anti-Semitism leveled against him by the Jews.

He was in full accord with the idea of doing something to save Jerusalem from the holocaust, and when I asked him whether the British would co-operate in working out such a scheme, he said bluntly, "Of course we would!"

I did a broadcast on the subject that afternoon and sub-

sequently sent off two dispatches to the *Post* pointing out the possibilities of saving Jerusalem from ruin. I can't claim they did much good, as things turned out.

When I left Sir Henry's office in the former King David Hotel, the guard was being changed in the special security area. The Warwicks had their band and buglers paraded, and the famous antelope which is their regimental mascot.

"We'll all go marchin' out o' here one day be'ind that band," said a lance corporal of the Warwicks at the barrier, "an' then bloody 'ell breaks loose in this town. I wouldn't want to be 'ere when the Bedouin come in. I don't mind these town Arabs, these tarboosh chaps—some of them are good enough blokes. But the Bedous—I've seen a bit of their work down south. Murder, rape, loot—it's all they live for."

"Maybe the United Nations can do something," I suggested.

"Usin' 'oo for soldiers?" demanded the lance corporal. "You're a Yank, I'm a Britisher. 'Oo's to be cops in this world except us two? All this mess 'ere in Palestine is just because our bloody governments don't agree on 'ow to stop it."

He jerked a thumb toward the building just behind the barrier.

"As fer the U.N.," he added, "their people are cooped up right in there, be'ind a machine-gun post. The Arabs won't even talk to 'em, and they can't go out except with an escort. Fat lot o' good they are."

I decided I'd better have a talk with the advance United Nations group, so next day I went to see them in their seclusion. Seclusion, I may add, was right.

They were living in a small apartment house inside the special security area. The entrance was commanded by a machine gun manned by two constables of the Palestine Police, ensconced behind a sandbag wall on the roof of the garage. Another constable guarded the door and carefully

scrutinized all visitors. He looked at my press pass and took me in to see Mr. Pablo Ascarate, the Spanish chief of the advance group.

Ascarate was the first person I had met in Palestine who thought there was any chance at all that the trusteeship proposal would work. He seemed to be a congenital optimist about the United Nations, which is not a bad attitude for a U.N. representative facing a discouraging situation. At least he was ready to try and keep on trying. Unfortunately, Ascarate had not seen the Arab leaders at all. They were boycotting the U.N. delegation, as they considered it the advance guard of partition. Therefore Ascarate had had the Jewish point of view and the British point of view, but he had very little idea of what the Arabs were thinking or what they might or might not agree to.

He has had a good deal of experience in Europe with frontier and minority problems.

"If I were an Arab leader," he said earnestly, "I'd infinitely prefer to give up some territory to the Jews and let them have their state, as against the difficulties of handling them as a minority within an Arab Palestine."

I said I didn't think the Arabs would be as far-sighted as that but I wished that he might have an opportunity to talk with them. He shrugged his shoulders and said he wished so too.

I went downstairs to talk to the military adviser of the U.N. group, Colonel Lund, a tall, steady-voiced Norwegian officer who impressed me as a thorough soldier.

"It's maddening to be cooped up here like this," he grumbled. "I don't even know if they pay any attention to our recommendations at Lake Success. They could do something about Jerusalem if they wanted to."

He'd been studying the Jerusalem truce problem, it seemed, and to considerable effect. Taking a mass of data furnished

him by the British and by the Jewish Agency, he had worked out quite a detailed plan for a U.N. regime to protect the Holy City.

"Jerusalem's menaced by war, if fighting starts here with Arabs and Jews mixed up in different sections of the city; by pestilence, if the water supply is cut off, as it may be; by famine, if the convoys can't get through from the coast; and by fire, especially in the Jewish sections, some of which are badly overcrowded, if municipal services break down and especially if there's no water. That's a fine state of affairs, and the Christian nations standing by saying, 'Tut-tut, too bad,' " Colonel Lund wound up.

He thought the British estimates of a thousand to twenty-five hundred men for the Jerusalem police force of U.N. much too low.

"You have a perimeter of about fifteen kilometers to defend," he pointed out. "You need six thousand men for that alone, including a reasonable reserve and an internal security force. Then you have your food convoys and your water supply to guard, including the pipe line. I'd say ten thousand men would be about right."

I was inclined to agree.

"But it will take a long time to raise and train such a force," I observed.

"Not so long," said Lund earnestly. "A call for volunteers to protect the Holy City would be answered by plenty of young men with combat experience in the late war—in Norway, I'm sure it would, and in your country too, as well as several others. Even if we had to begin with a smaller force, the very fact that the call had gone out and the men were being enrolled would have a great moral effect. But the time is short—very short. This is already April second. We have just six weeks to make that beginning, and so far all is talk, talk, talk."

"You don't think there is any chance for a general truce in Palestine, Colonel?" I asked.

He answered me almost exactly in the words of my Haganah friends in Tel Aviv.

"There's got to be a military decision here before there can be a political decision," he said. "I'm convinced of that. The Arabs seem to think they can drive the Jews into the sea. The Jews seem to think they can defend their state. The British are withdrawing. The United States will do nothing effective. The United Nations has no military force that can prevent a Palestine war, whatever might be done in Jerusalem. So there is nothing for it except a fight. I wish I could see some other way, but I can't."

As I left the building where the U.N. group was sequestered, the Palestine Police constable checked my credentials again.

"We have to be careful," he said rather apologetically. "The Arabs have had a couple of tries at these U.N. people, and we can't take chances."

"You mean they've tried to kill them?" I queried.

"Right-o, they have," the policeman said. He pointed at the tall beautiful tower of the Y.M.C.A. Building, close by. "Why, just last week an Arab sniper sneaked up into that tower and fired half a dozen shots into this building. The Warwicks went up after the blighter, but he got away."

Later that day I had a chance to look over reports compiled by British Intelligence officers and the Palestine Police on the strength and condition of the Arab and Jewish fighting forces in Palestine.

Adding this information to what I had been able to pick up personally, I came to an estimate of about twenty-five thousand men as the mobile field force which might be at the disposal of the Haganah. This was at that time principally composed of six infantry brigades of three battalions each,



with a few additional battalions, communications troops and pioneer units. Artillery units were being trained, but had guns and fire-control equipment sufficient only for instruction purposes. There were a few armored cars of normal type, and not a little "home-made" armor, but no tanks.

The Arab "Army of Liberation," composed largely of Syrian and Iraqi volunteers who had filtered into the country, centered around Nablus, north of Jerusalem. Its strength was estimated at about five thousand men. Discipline was said to be fair, armament rather diverse, leadership poor. It was commanded by a Syrian adventurer named Fawzi Bey el Kawukji, who had had a rather checkered career. The Arab bands of Abdel Kader el Husseini, representing the military arm of the Mufti's power in Palestine, were drawn chiefly from the villages around Jerusalem and could muster three or four thousand fighting men in a pinch, though Abdel Kader did not normally maintain anything more than a bodyguard of three or four hundred.

Both sides had considerable reserve strength. The Home Guard units of the Haganah might total as many as thirty thousand, while the Arab Youth organizations and other Arab volunteer or local police units might produce twenty thousand riflemen—though nowhere nearly so well organized and disciplined as the Haganah reserves.

The one advantage possessed by the Army of Liberation was that it had some artillery at its disposal—probably as many as six 75-mm. guns, supplied by the Syrian Army. Even so it was clear that if this outfit tangled with the Haganah's field force it was going to be heavily defeated. The same could be said for the bands and the Arab youth. Within Palestine, the Jewish forces were firmly superior. Whether they would prove superior to the national armies of the surrounding Arab countries, if these were used against them,

remained a question on which I could form no final opinion until I had seen the Arab forces.

Dining a day or so later with two of the Haganah officers charged with defense of the Jewish portions of Jerusalem, a man named Comay of unstated rank and Major Vivian Herzog, son of the Grand Rabbi, I found them confident that no Arab power could destroy Israel. But they were not happy over the immediate prospects of Jerusalem.

"The Jewish quarters of the city now are down to three days' flour supply," Major Herzog said. "We're trying to work a convoy up from the coast, but the Arabs are defending the road and it is hard going."

"What's the British attitude on this?" I wanted to know.

"Well, they haven't exactly said so," I was informed, "but the size of it is, that since they can't keep the road open they won't take too much notice of any disturbances if we can get some food through. The Arab press is screaming to high heaven, of course."

"It doesn't look well for the British to allow a pitched battle to be fought in mandated territory," I suggested, "but it wouldn't look well for a hundred thousand Jewish folks in Jerusalem to be starved by the Arabs, either, without the British doing anything about it. So they just sit tight and hope you can work out your own problems."

"That's about it," Comay agreed.

"What are the chances of a truce for Jerusalem after May fifteenth, under U.N. supervision?" I asked.

"We'd agree," said Herzog, "but I don't think the Arabs will agree. They see these hundred thousand people of ours as a heavy responsibility for the Haganah. They realize that Jerusalem is a long way from the major centers of our strength, and if they can keep our field force busy trying to hold open the road from Jerusalem to the sea, they won't have

so much to worry about elsewhere. It makes a fine diversion, from their point of view. If Jerusalem were being policed and provisioned by the United Nations, our field force would be free to deal with the defense of the rest of our territory or to concentrate in full strength against any Arab invading army that might cross the border of Palestine."

Those were prophetic words—how accurately prophetic, I did not realize then, though I saw the military force of Herzog's arguments. He had served with the Highland Light Infantry in the war, and was now in charge of Haganah intelligence in Jerusalem, with his major task for the moment that of maintaining liaison between the Jewish forces and the British.

I went with the two officers to a party at the house of Mr. Agronsky, editor of the *Palestine Post*—the only English-language newspaper then published in Palestine, and violently pro-Zionist in policy. I was immediately assailed with questions as to what the United States was going to do about the Palestine problem, and encountered at once the curious atmosphere of distortion and suspicion which has, I fear, been bred in the minds of these people by the total lack of consistency in American policy toward Palestine.

I hasten to add that the Arabs have the same attitude.

In fact, there was not a newspaper in the whole of Palestine, Arab or Jewish, which made any very great effort to print facts. Every occurrence was twisted to fit a propaganda purpose. The acts of governments, the utterances of statesmen, were assessed not at their face value, and examined not as to their actual intent, but rather as to whether they could be turned to account in the local struggle, or as to what hidden and sinister purpose might lie behind them. If the policies of the United States and Great Britain were actually conducted in the cloak-and-dagger atmosphere of conspiracy which was

attributed to them in Palestine, the late lamented Niccoló Machiavelli would turn over in his grave with envy.

I commented on this to Farny Fowle at the Agronsky party, and Farny said, "George, here you get the fastest misinterpretation of facts that has ever been known in history."

At that moment a charming young lady came up to us and asked us if we were not ashamed to have our whole country under the thumb of Ernest Bevin. We said mildly that we didn't think this was quite true. Whereupon we were treated to fifteen minutes of hysterical abuse, the kindest thing she said of us being that we were poor blind fools who did not even understand plain facts which were known to all the world.

But then, next day at lunch when I suggested to a hospitable and kindly Arab lawyer that the Jews claimed the British were arming the Arabs, I got fifteen minutes of impassioned discourse on the utter perfidy of the said British who were, it appeared, taking arms from the Arabs and giving them to the Jews to kill Arabs with, and this with the encouragement and at the instigation of the government of the United States.

As Farny said wearily, "In this setup, you can't win."

I had hoped to be able to go up to Nablus and see the Arab Army of Liberation. But it appeared that the British were not much more able to move freely in the "Arab triangle" than they were to operate in Tel Aviv. My friend Bob Allen, the army public relations officer, told me that Fawzi Bey was in Damascus, and in his absence there was no one at the Nablus headquarters who could authorize my visit.

"We could take you there with an escort," he said, "but they wouldn't talk to you unless you came to see Fawzi Bey with his previous permission."

My Arab lawyer friend was equally discouraging. Urged to explain, he finally admitted that the editorial policies of my

paper were not regarded with too much favor in Arab circles.

"But I have nothing to do with editorial policy," I pointed out. "I'm a columnist. I write as I please, chiefly on military matters and the relation of military power to policy. My editor sent me out here with instructions to report on the military situation in the Middle East with complete objectivity and impartiality, exactly as I saw it. I wouldn't have taken the assignment on any other basis. How can I report on your military position if you won't let me see your troops and talk with your general?"

My Arab friend said he would pass this word along, but the tone of voice in which he said it was not encouraging. A British officer to whom I repeated the conversation laughed at me.

"They know who you are," he said. "They don't want you to see their so-called army because you'd tell the truth about it, and they don't think they could fool you. They've built a hell of a big propaganda up on this Army of Liberation, especially in Syria and Iraq. When you get to Damascus and Bagdad, you'll find that this propaganda is the chief thing that is keeping those two governments in office. If you go to Nablus and then file a dispatch and say the Army of Liberation is a rabble that one Haganah battalion would sweep right off the field, it might bring both cabinets down. My guess is you'll never see Nablus."

He was right. I didn't.

On Saturday it was very cold. I was getting tired of cold baths. Dickie Stubbs was furious because some Arabs had hijacked a truck containing most of the P.I.O.'s motion-picture equipment.

"These bastards," he said, "will steal anything. Why, over in Transjordan the gang leaders are taking orders for cars, whatever you want—a Packard, a Chrysler, a Cadillac—and then they come up here to Jerusalem and steal 'em. Seven

hundred dollars in American cash will get you any car you can name. There's nothing the police can do unless they catch 'em in the act."

Well, it was true enough when you came to think of it. British authority would end on May 15. Detective work would be no good; no courts would exist to try the criminal if caught. The Palestine Police did what they could; but there wasn't much incentive for real police work in Jerusalem right then.

"I'll bet they'd deliver the High Commissioner's Rolls for a thousand," snarled Dickie. "Wonder who bought my motion-picture outfit? Some fat Egyptian in Cairo, probably."

We went down to the press bar for a drink. I was called to the telephone.

An unfamiliar voice said: "Mr. Eliot? This is a representative of the Stern group. We would like to talk to you. Can you meet me in the Eden Hotel at four o'clock?"

I swallowed twice and said, "Yes" in a weak voice.

"Please carry a copy of *Life* magazine in your hand so we can identify you," directed the voice. "Of course you will not mention this to your British friends." The telephone clicked, the line was dead.

The Stern group had a decidedly unpleasant reputation. But the Eden Hotel, though in the Jewish zone, was a public place where violence was unlikely. I had half an hour to get there. It was Saturday, the Jewish Sabbath; no Jewish taxis at work, no Arab taxi driver would dare go into the Jewish zone and I somehow didn't feel like asking the British for a car. I solved the problem by getting Johnny Donovan to drive me over. He cheered me up on the way by recounting the threats which the Stern group had made against some other correspondents to whom they had taken a dislike.

"Someday they'll figure they'd better make an example of one of us," he said. "Why not today? Why not you?"

I went into the lounge of the Eden Hotel, sat down at a table and ordered a pink gin. A nice little man who was a representative of the Y.M.H.A. came over and started talking to me. I wished he would go away. I looked around; there were very few people in the room, none paying any attention to me. No—there by the door—two men, dark browed, rather sinister, standing close together looking directly at me.

I suddenly realized that I had forgotten to bring along the copy of *Life* which I was supposed to carry for identification purposes. Making a weak excuse to my Y.M.H.A. friend, I went out to the newsstand. They didn't have *Life*. I returned to my seat. The two men by the door regarded me with cold eyes as I passed them, but said nothing. I thought one of them had a bulge under his left armpit. Some people at another table left the lounge. The huge room was now almost empty of people, except for myself and the two men by the door, to whom my Y.M.H.A. friend was now talking. The waiter came over, I ordered another pink gin.

In a very low voice I asked the waiter, "Don't look around now, but do you know those two men over there?"

"Oh, yes," said the waiter. "Very famous doctors from Hadassah Hospital."

He mentioned their names, which I didn't quite get.

I felt rather silly. I leaned back and sipped my pink gin.

Abruptly—I didn't see him approach—a young man slid into the chair at my table. He was blond, athletic-looking, rather a Teutonic type. He had a very large automatic pistol in the waistband of his trousers, and he made little if any attempt to conceal it.

"You're Mr. Eliot," he said, a statement rather than a question. "You've been told that we Fighters for the Freedom of Israel are all murderers. Do I look like a murderer? Do I look like what you expected?"

I thought it best to say that he didn't look like a murderer to me, rather than to observe that any blond Teuton could at least suggest murder to my mind.

He began to talk.

He did not start with the wrongs and hopes of Israel.

Rather, he talked of the evils of American imperialism and of the peace-loving Soviet Union, so deeply wronged by the wicked capitalist vampires of Wall Street.

I could have closed my eyes and imagined that I was listening to Radio Moscow in English. He produced all the well-worn shibboleths and clichés of the Soviet propaganda "line." The worst of it was, the young man appeared to believe what he was saying.

He paused for breath.

"I've heard all this before, many times," I said. "But what has it to do with the situation in Palestine?"

"We're determined not to allow Israel to become an outpost of Western imperialism in the Middle East," the young man said. "We will have no alliances. We want complete independence."

"You'd prefer to have Russian influence here rather than American or British?" I asked.

"No, no outside influence at all," he said. "We're not Communists. But we think Russia is for peace. We think American and British policy, as at present directed, is for war. So we regard America and Britain as our enemies."

I asked him how he felt about the talk of a truce regime for Jerusalem.

"We would be against any government in Jerusalem except a Jewish government," he replied. "But we might be willing to go along with an international regime for a little while, in order to save the city from the horrors of war."

He added that this last was his personal opinion; there was no official Sternist policy on the subject that he knew of.



"What about a general truce in Palestine, if the United Nations can arrange it?" I asked.

"We are opposed in principle to any truce as long as the whole of Palestine is not in Jewish hands," he replied firmly. "However, once the Jewish state is established and a Jewish army in the field, we will discontinue all our military activities inside Jewish territory. There we will remain only as a political force. We will continue to operate as a military body in the non-Jewish parts of Palestine, and elsewhere as we may think necessary."

"Then you recognize that there can be only one military command in a war?" I suggested.

"Of course," he replied rather impatiently. "We are soldiers. We know that."

"The Irgun Zvai Leumi don't seem to know it," I remarked.

"The I.Z.L. are not sufficiently clear in their thinking," he told me. "For example, they won't come right out as we do and say they are at war with Britain. They just say they are against the British administration in Palestine."

I remembered what the Haganah officer in Tel Aviv had said about the Sternists—that they were devoted idealists, misguided but thoroughly indoctrinated.

"You are against any compromise settlement for Palestine that doesn't accord with your principles?" I asked.

"We will oppose any such compromise with all our means," he replied. "Now I must go. I hope you will remember what I have said to you, and print the truth about us when you get home."

He rose, and so did I.

"We wanted to talk to you last night," he told me. "We followed you from Agronsky's house, but you had a Haganah officer with you and so we did not make contact with you then. Good-by."

He was gone, as abruptly as he had come.

I went out of the hotel. He had already disappeared, but miraculously there was a taxi waiting. I had a date with some of the more moderate Arab leaders, a fact which I had neglected to mention to my Sternist contact—and I drove hastily to the P.I.O. to meet my host.

There were six Arabs assembled in the house of an Arab correspondent named Kalmar. Tea was ready, and a table of little cakes. These Arabs were not members of the Arab Higher Committee. They were representatives of moderate feeling—a banker, a dentist, two educators, a district officer and Kalmar himself. Five of them were graduates of the American University at Beirut. All spoke English as well as I did, or better.

They started right in by saying that they, like all Arabs, were unalterably opposed to the establishment of any Jewish state in Palestine. They were willing to allow Jews “reasonable autonomy” in districts with Jewish majorities, but no Jewish state, no partition of Palestine. As for a truce for Jerusalem alone, “Why should the ninety or a hundred thousand Jews in Jerusalem be better off than any other Jews?”

One educator said, “There might be a special regime worked out for the Old City, where most of the Holy Places are anyway.”

“And where most of the Arab inhabitants of Jerusalem now live,” I remarked.

“There are some Jews there.”

“Yes. The old-timers, the Orthodox Jews who have lived there for centuries, and would regard it as sacrilegious to live anywhere else,” I said. “But there are only a couple of thousand at the most, and there are twenty thousand Arabs there, with a company of the Highland Light Infantry guarding the line between the two groups. A truce for the Old City alone would be as much an advantage to the Arabs as you say a

truce for the whole Jerusalem area would be to the Jews."

"There are Jewish fighters in the Old City too," I was told. "Thousands of them."

I recalled the figures of the Palestine Police report I had seen.

"Hundreds, rather—maybe seven or eight hundred, at most," I said. But we were getting into the endless details of argument, and several minutes of recrimination against the British followed before the conversation got back to the main problem.

"You think there can be no real compromise, that there will be general fighting in Palestine when the British go?" I inquired.

There was a general chorus of assent.

"We Arabs must depend on our fighting ability to show the Jews and the world that Palestine is our country," the district officer said. "If we make a compromise, if we let them have a state, they will expand until they have all our lands and all our wealth. They are too clever for us at politics and in business. We have not yet attained a high enough standard of education to deal with them on an equal basis. We can save ourselves from Jewish expansion only by force."

"And you have no doubt as to the outcome of an appeal to force?"

"No, of course not. Perhaps the Jews might defeat the Palestinian Arabs. But what can they do against the regular armies of all the Arab states—Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, Transjordan, Egypt, Saudi Arabia—all fighting together? In fact, we'd have settled the matter long ago if it hadn't been for the British, who always favor and protect the Jews."

I asked whether the fear of a flood of Jewish immigrants was not at the bottom of the whole trouble. They all agreed that this was true. I pointed out that there were only 1,500,000 Jews in the whole of Europe, outside the Soviet Union,

and that probably not more than half this number would wish to go to Palestine. Couldn't a compromise be worked out on the question of immigration?

The dentist retorted that no American was in very good case to ask why more Jews could not go to Palestine, when we would not relax our own immigration laws so that a few thousand more could be admitted to our own huge country.

There being no very good answer to this, I could only remark rather feebly that there were many obstacles to any alteration of our immigration laws, and that I hoped something would be worked out before the adjournment of the 80th Congress.

"Your moral position before the world, and certainly Arab belief in your sincerity, would be immensely helped if this were done," my Arab friends told me, and with great emphasis.

"And American money is being used to buy arms for the Jews," one of the educators said. "Nobody buys any arms for us."

"The British are arming Transjordan and Iraq," I observed.

"Only strictly within the limits of their treaties" was the retort. "They confiscate arms from Arabs here in Palestine. The British will be no help to us. They help the Jews."

The only point I was able to make which seemed to meet with any measure of acceptance was my criticism of the fact that never during the past five years had representatives of Jews and Arabs sat down together around a table to thresh out their differences. They said this was the fault of the Jews, but they were a little shaken by my insistence that fair-minded people did not understand a refusal to talk things over.

When I went back to the hotel to pack for my flight to Cairo in the morning, I found my friend, George Polk of C.B.S., who had just arrived from Bagdad for a visit to Jeru-

salem en route back to his post in Athens. We had a long talk, with George giving me a lot of useful information about conditions in Bagdad and Teheran, where I would be going presently. That was like George, who was always more anxious to help other people than to get help for himself. He was an honest reporter and a good friend.

There was a dance at the Salvia that night. George was very gay.

We made a date to meet in Athens.

I did not know that he would be murdered before he could keep it.

## Cairo

*April 4-7, 1948*

I WAS supposed to get an early start for Lydda to catch the Cairo plane. My Jewish taxi driver was afraid to go to the air terminal, which is in an Arab area not far from the Jaffa Gate. I finally induced him to try it, my bags being a little heavy to lug up the hill.

Just as we arrived, there was a series of heavy explosions not very far away. The taxi driver tore out of there, hardly waiting for his money. I walked down to the end of the street and discovered that British tanks were firing six-pounder shells into the Yemin Moshe quarter. A British officer told me that the Jewish snipers had been firing again at Arab traffic near the Jaffa Gate and on the Hebron road, and, after warning, the tanks were called into action to put a stop to the sniping.

I went back to the air-lines office, checked in and climbed into a somewhat dilapidated station wagon which was to take me to Lydda. It was the property of Misr Airlines, the Egyptian commercial aviation system. I did not much care about riding the Lydda road in the thing, and neither did the young British foreign-service officer who was the other passenger, but we lighted cigarettes and tried to be nonchalant.

The firing at the Yemin Moshe ceased, and presently the car set off. A young Arab, who crawled into the front seat at the last moment, said the Yemin Moshe trouble had started when an Arab driving a donkey had gone down the slope toward the Jewish buildings. The Jews shot and killed him for no reason at all, according to the youth: "A harmless old

man—I knew him well. All he had on the donkey's back was a couple of water bags."

Later I learned that the Jewish authorities claimed the Arab had explosives in the donkey's load, and that his approach was planned as part of an Arab scheme to blow up two Jewish houses. At any rate, he had been shot, the Arabs started firing in reprisal, the Jews began shooting at every Arab they could see, and finally the tanks came in and stopped the whole affair.

It was just one of those things, in which the truth will never be known. But the dead in such an affair are just as dead as if they had fallen on a stricken field.

It rained dismally all the way to Lydda, as it had rained the day I came to Jerusalem. The hills were just as bare, and apparently just as untenanted. Once, in a deep cup between surrounding heights, a tire blew out. We stood on the road while the driver and the young Arab replaced the wheel. The tension of Palestine was in the wet air. We wondered who might be watching us from those rocky summits. A convoy of vehicles came toward us from the direction of Lydda—was it a Jewish fighting convoy, carrying food to Jerusalem? The young Arab took off his red tarboosh and stuck it under the seat, just in case.

But it was a British convoy coming up from Sarafand.

We sloshed into Lydda through mud that stained the leggings of the Highlander sentries at the barrier. The routine of passport control, customs and ticket checking was quickly over. In half an hour I was in the air, looking down on the breakers along the coast by Tel Aviv.

And suddenly, the tension was gone. I sat back to read over my notes, and when the Egyptian across the way passed me his cigarettes I thanked him politely and we started a mild conversation about the Sudan problem, in very bad French (mine, anyway—his was better).

Presently I was looking down on a big steamer plowing along the Suez Canal. An hour and a half from Lydda, we landed in bright sunshine at Almazan airport, to face the delays and red tape of the Egyptian customs, as annoying as any I have encountered.

At Shepherd's Hotel they didn't have a room with a bath, as usual. But they had a room, anyway, and there were letters from home waiting for me at the British air-lines office next door, which was a great comfort.

At the porter's desk I saw James G. McDonald, later to become the first U.S. minister to Israel, and for years an ardent supporter of Zionism. He told me he was en route to South Africa to speak before audiences of South African Jews on behalf of the United Jewish Appeal. I dined with him and his wife, and told them of what I had seen in Palestine.

"How do you sum it up?" he asked me.

"I feel as though I'd seen a little—a very little—of the birth of a nation," I told him. "But it is a nation which must still establish its right to be born by fighting for the right to live."

He said rather sadly that he was afraid I might be right, though he hoped that the United Nations might find some way to prevent war. He seemed to blame many of the defects of American policy on the oil companies, which were, he said, working tooth and nail for the Arabs. He asked what I thought of the fighting potential of the Arab states, and I could say only that I was here in Cairo to begin examining that side of the picture.

During the next two days I gathered considerable information about the Egyptian armed forces. The most important single military fact about Egypt, however, I learned the afternoon of the day after my arrival in Cairo. I was at the embassy to pay my respects to Ambassador Tuck, when a secretary brought in word that the whole police force of Egypt had gone on strike.



This, it seemed, had not been expected. There had been threats of a police strike over wages and conditions of service, but it had been thought that the matter was in course of settlement. Now, suddenly, the strike had come. As I left the embassy, the air attaché, Lieutenant Colonel Peddie, was just driving out of the gate.

He hailed me, said he was going downtown to have a look at conditions and asked me if I wanted to come along. As we approached the main part of the city, troops were everywhere in evidence, guarding intersections and public buildings. Neither uniforms nor weapons seemed to be in especially good condition; the men looked anything but smart, and the company officers lacked the air of brisk confidence which American or British junior officers wear when on duty with troops. They seemed lackadaisical and somewhat nervous.

In Ibrahim Pasha Square there were loose stones on the street and some broken glass. Turning a corner, we found a police barrier. The embassy kavass, Tewfik, who has been with the embassy for thirty years and likes to tell you how many ambassadors he has seen come and go, hopped out on the running board and loudly demanded passage.

I have never seen a crowd gather so fast. They seemed to rise right up from the paving stones. One moment there were just a few curious bystanders; the next, the car was jammed round with hostile faces. An Egyptian Army officer in khaki pushed through the crowd, bawling orders. He had seen the "C.D." (Corps Diplomatique) license plates. The driver, retaining admirable composure and seeing that he could not go ahead, backed up suddenly at a favorable moment, swung clear of the crowd and sped away around the square.

There were two armored cars in position at the corner of the square, and troops all along the way as we went past the park toward Shephard's.

The truth was, as I discovered during the evening, that the

Cairo mob had risen almost as if at a signal the moment the strike was on. There had been a little disorder, but the troops were ready and had come in so fast from their outlying barracks that they had the city in hand before trouble could really get going. Their discipline had been good, and the plans for their use well laid.

The King keeps a considerable part of the army in the Cairo district, and it was for this reason that the great city had been spared any serious consequences of the police strike. But in Alexandria, where there are not so many troops, a number of people had been killed, shops had been looted and burned, and considerable property damage had taken place before the army managed to restore quiet.

So the salient military fact about Egypt was and is that King Farouk and his government do not dare send any great part of the army outside of the country, because it is the mainstay of the royal authority. This is hardly the place for a discourse on Egyptian politics, but it is notorious that the Wafd Party of Nahas Pasha would command a resounding majority in any fair election, and is kept out of office only by the stubborn refusal of the King to accept Nahas or any associate of Nahas as head of his government. Therefore, the King continues to juggle "cabinets of personalities" back and forth, the real issues are never squarely faced, and little or nothing is done to improve the wretched conditions under which the vast majority of the Egyptian people live.

This leaves the government, in such a crisis as that of the police strike, entirely dependent on the loyalty and immediate availability of the army.

The total strength of the Egyptian Army is about fifty thousand men, but only some twenty-eight thousand of these are in combat units. The rest are service troops or recruits under instruction. Of the twenty-eight thousand combat troops, about one-third are anti-aircraft or coastal artillery. These are

the most efficient units in the army. But their equipment is obsolete; for example, the antiaircraft brigade has no radar at all, and still possesses a whole regiment of searchlights—considered virtually out of date by all modern armies. Egypt formerly purchased all her military equipment from Britain. Lately there has been an evident desire to purchase it from the United States, the Egyptians saying that the British sell them too much obsolete stuff at too high prices. But the President's embargo on all arms shipments to the Middle East, arising from the Palestine troubles, put a stop to Egyptian military purchases in America, causing considerable resentment.

The mobile units of the Egyptian Army include nine infantry battalions, three machine-gun battalions, a cavalry regiment, a light tank regiment and a regiment of armored cars. There are three field artillery regiments, varying considerably in type and caliber of guns. There is also the Frontier Force, which is considered fairly efficient. I saw some of them in Cairo during the police strike—tall men in turbans, looking much like Indian troops. These various units are organized in seven brigades, each commanded by a brigadier, and five military districts, each commanded by a major general—which is certainly a sufficient complement of general officers and staffs for so small an army.

The staff college and the military college (Egypt's West Point) are well thought of by American and British observers. I didn't see them. But my impression is that the younger Egyptian officers, say from lieutenant colonel down, are well instructed. The older ones tend to the "fat Pasha" type. The worst fault of the Egyptian officer is his disinclination to accept responsibility. He thinks first of all of protecting himself. Hence he passes the buck to his superior when faced with the smallest decision. The net result is a tremendous congestion of work in the office of the chief of staff, who is re-

quired to decide matters which in our army would be handled by company commanders.

Another weakness of the Egyptian Army is maintenance and supply. There is a shortage of good mechanics and of a proper system of accountability. This also affects the air force.

Egyptian pilots handle aircraft well, but of sixty Spitfires now available to the six fighter squadrons, only about twenty can be put into the air at one time. The bomber force is equipped with old British navigational trainers, with no proper bomb racks or sights. "They'd have to drop bombs out the window if they wanted to do any bombing," an R.A.F. officer said to me. Like the army, the junior officers of the air force are better than the senior. The chief of the air staff is an army major general.

Tuesday morning I woke to find a cable from C.B.S. asking for a broadcast from Cairo on the situation in Palestine. I dashed around to the Marconi office, to discover—too late to do anything about it—that in order to broadcast from Cairo, the company ordering the circuit must apply by cable to the Royal Ministry of Posts and Telegraphs, giving the name of the person who is to broadcast and the subject of the broadcast. Thereafter the full script must be submitted in advance. This is not considered to be censorship; they become highly annoyed if it is so designated. But that is what it amounted to in my case; at least it kept me off the air because there wasn't time to get the red tape unwound.

After returning to the hotel, I found a note from Abdel Rahman Azzam Pasha, secretary general of the Arab League, inviting me to lunch at the Mehemet Ali Club at two o'clock. I had left a message at his office asking for an interview, and this was the reply.

Azzam Pasha is a slender, alert and highly intelligent man of about forty-five. He is the mainspring, the spark plug, the

—call it what you like—of the Arab League. In fact, he *is* the Arab League. Lacking his personal gifts, his ability to resolve differences, his devotion to the cause of Arab nationalism, nothing could keep the rulers of the seven Arab states pulling together for twenty-four hours. Their mutual jealousies and distrusts would tear the League apart instantly if it were not for Azzam's constant application of lubricants to overheated parts of the creaking machinery. In fact, Azzam himself could not do the job if it were not for the fact that the Palestine issue affords a focal point on which all the Arab leaders can unite, however much they may differ on other matters. Azzam keeps Palestine cleverly in the foreground of discussion and public interest. By so doing, he contrives to hold the League together.

We had one of the club's special Martinis in the lounge—or rather I did, Azzam taking tomato juice. Then we moved to a small private dining room and spent two hours over a most excellent lunch: pancakes wrapped round a filling of spiced meat, tender slices of beef with an assortment of vegetables, Egyptian sweets with little cakes, and the best coffee I encountered in the Middle East.

Azzam talked freely—how frankly, of course, I am not sure, but subsequent events led me to think he held very little back.

He began by saying that he quite realized the military strength of the Haganah. He feared I would find the forces of the Arab states neither so well organized nor so efficient. Organization, he admitted, was not the Arabs' strong point.

"Our real strength," he told me, "is in the long pull. We will never give up. The Jewish objective is a peaceful economy, which they can develop and expand. They will find they cannot get it. We will give them no rest. They will have to devote much of their time and effort and revenue to constant guerrilla warfare on their frontiers. They will find no

markets for their exports. They will have to be constantly subsidized by Jews in America and elsewhere. So at last they will have to come to terms."

I said, as I had said before, that I found nothing in Arab history, at least in recent years, to justify me in believing that Arabs had the quality of persistence in the face of determined opposition necessary to make such a policy successful.

"The Arab loves to fight," said Azzam. "I don't indulge in illusions of early victory, and I discourage my friends when they talk of driving the Jews into the sea in one big sweep. But I do think that our people will keep up the pressure, that enough of our young men will fight and raid and harass the Jews so that they will not be able to establish their peaceful economy."

"Do you have any hope of settling the issue without fighting?" I asked.

"No," said Azzam. "It will certainly come to fighting. If the United Nations would seal off the frontiers of Palestine, the fighting might be localized. That's about all we can hope for."

"But how can you seal off the land frontiers?" I questioned. "You can blockade the coast, which would cut off the Jews from overseas help. But can the United Nations prevent the Syrians or the Egyptians or King Abdullah of Transjordan from sending men and arms into Palestine unless there is a U.N. police force inside the country?"

He admitted the difficulty. He would, he said, be prepared to undertake complete disarmament in Palestine—disarmament of Arabs and Jews alike—and he quite recognized the need for some sort of interim U.N. or international regime, provided it was not to be in preparation for partition.

This is typical both of the Jewish and Arab viewpoints. I was reminded of the words of an experienced reporter who had spent much time in the Middle East: "As long," he had

said, "as there exists as a factor in the Palestine situation any superior power which can influence or enforce a decision, whether that power be Britain or the United States or the United Nations, just so long the efforts of both sides will be directed, not toward finding a settlement, but toward influencing the superior power to give an advantage to one side or the other. Neither side will consent to serious negotiations with a third and superior power as mediator unless the mediator consents to give it an advantage as a prior consideration to sitting down at the council table. This situation will continue until one of two things happens: either a superior power will compel both sides to sit down and negotiate, which in effect means imposing a settlement by exterior force, or, in the absence of negotiation and compulsion, the future of Palestine will be settled on the battlefield by force of arms."

Now I found Azzam insisting that in any U.N. action, it be recognized that it was "not in preparation for partition"—in other words, partition was to be ruled out in advance. This was directly opposed to the Jewish view, frequently reiterated by Ben Gurion and other leaders: "We will accept any reasonable U.N. decision, provided it recognizes the existence of the Jewish state as provided in the General Assembly's resolution on partition."

As between these two directly conflicting points of view, the only apparent reconciliation was force: exterior force or the force of the contending parties.

I said something like this to Azzam, and he nodded rather gloomily and said he had no doubt it would come to that.

I tried him out on the Jerusalem truce. He came right back with the argument that this would free the Haganah of responsibility for the defense of the Jewish population of Jerusalem. I had heard that one before. It apparently represented considered Arab policy.

Returning to the point he had made about the continuity of Arab efforts against the Jews, he cited the Arab resistance to Italian forces in Libya, where, he said, the Italians with 150,000 troops could not stamp out Arab resistance to their rule. He had taken part in this campaign as a cavalry officer, and is proud of his military background. I could not help but feel that his military expectations in Palestine were largely, and understandably, colored by his Libyan experience.

Azzam is a devoted Arab nationalist, and looks forward to the day when to the present Arab League will be added an independent Libya, Algeria, Tunisia and Morocco. I think he is able and sincere, and I am not inclined to believe the tales that are put about to the effect that he is really working for the particular interests of Egypt, though he is himself Egyptian. He really hopes for Arab unity, and is not, I think, altogether displeased that the Palestine affair has provided a sort of catalyst for at least temporary Arab co-operation as nothing else, perhaps, could do. I wondered whether he saw in the Jewish state the focus of an Arab revolt against Western domination which might spread over the whole Arab world. He kept emphasizing that none of the Arab states could draw back now, because of the internal pressures that had been set up by popular agitation for an Arab-ruled Palestine.

When I left him, Azzam very kindly gave me notes of introduction to Riad Solh and Jamal Mardan, respectively Prime Ministers of Lebanon and Syria.

That evening I dined with Dick Hilary, Eastern manager for British Overseas Airways, and his lovely and wholly delightful wife. I sat next to a Major Ryan, formerly of the British political warfare department. He had served in Iran during the war, and told me several amusing stories of conditions in the Iranian Army.

One was about the crack 1st Division, stationed at Teheran,



which held a review a few days before the Anglo-Russian ultimatum\* preceding the entrance into the city of the troops of the two powers. The division paraded, complete with field equipment, and its officers swore to defend the capital to the last drop of their blood. But when news of the approach of the foreign troops was received, the division just disappeared overnight: all but the division commander, a Greek intelligence officer, one sergeant major and two soldiers, who went round the bazaar with whips driving trembling deserters out of their places of refuge.

There was some talk of Palestine, and the general view was that the Egyptian ruling class couldn't care less about Palestine but would have to make some sort of gesture so as not to lose face with the other Arab states. As for the wretched common folk, they had no thought except how to eke out a miserable existence, and the "pashas" had no thought for them.

One British lady said she had heard about volunteer nurses being enrolled for Palestine and had decided to look into the matter. She was assured that eighty had volunteered. Two organizations had been at work, and had enrolled forty girls each to take nurse's training courses. The British lady was persistent; she wanted to know more. Finally she discovered that the two lists were the same—there were only forty volunteers. She went to volunteer headquarters, and found a young man sitting at a table and a wretched-looking girl in a dirty white smock crouched in a corner knitting.

"I want to see some of your nursing volunteers under training," she said. "I understand there are forty."

"Ah, not quite, madame," said the young man politely. "We did have forty names, but only ten actually showed up to take their training."

"Then let me talk to some of them," she requested. "At what hospital are they receiving this training?"

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\* In 1941.

The young man spread his hands.

"Alas, madame," he said, "not many of them stayed more than the first day. They did not enjoy the training."

"Not many? How many?"

"Well, to be frank, madame," said the young man, "only this one girl in the corner there stayed, and since she is not very bright we have not sent her to a hospital. She just sits there and knits socks for the troops. She has finished one already."

If I don't miss my guess, this tale just about pictures the attitude of the average Egyptian toward the Palestine volunteer movement.

Of course it also pictures the standard British contempt for the Egyptians and all their works. The British consistently rate the Egyptians lower than do Americans; perhaps because they know them better, though there is still something of the old imperial hauteur among Britons in this part of the world.

The British are having their troubles with the Egyptians over the matter of the evacuation of British troops from the Canal area and over the Sudan, which the Egyptians would like to rule without British assistance, though the Sudanese are of two minds on this matter.

There are still some forty thousand British troops in the Canal region, of which a little over half are combat troops. But there are none in Cairo, and resurgent Egyptian nationalism has reached a point where a British officer or soldier cannot appear in Cairo or Alexandria in uniform.

The morning after the Hilary dinner, I was visited at my hotel by a person whose name, for obvious reasons, I won't mention. The purpose of the visit was to tell me something of the plight of the Jewish population of Cairo and Alexandria. There are about thirty-five thousand Jews in each city. They live in constant terror lest there be an outbreak of mob violence against them. If it comes to open fighting in Pales-

tine, if armed Jews with modern weapons in their hands are shooting down Arabs, the dread cry: "Kill the Jews!" might well be heard again in the streets of Moslem cities, as it has been all too often before. Yet it is very difficult for an Egyptian Jew to leave the country. Every obstacle is placed in the way. An Egyptian Jew cannot, usually, obtain evidence of Egyptian nationality, even if he and his father and grandfather before him were born in Egypt. If he does manage to establish Egyptian nationality and get an Egyptian passport, he still finds it almost impossible to get an exit permit. The Jews of Cairo suspect, rightly or wrongly, that this is due to the fact that they own most of Cairo's business and financial establishments; somebody may be thinking of taking over all this wealth one of these days. The police strike hasn't made them feel any better, though it is fair to say that such violence as took place—chiefly in Alexandria—was apparently just an outright expression of discontent with the government and had no anti-Semitic character. Next time, however, it may be different.

It was now time for me to move on, and early in the afternoon I took off from Almazan airport for Beirut.

## Beirut and Damascus

*April 7-12, 1948*

BEIRUT is proud of being a little outpost of Western culture on the fringe of Asia. Its streets are narrow and crowded. Its shops, office buildings, trolley cars and traffic cops might belong to a city of Spain or Italy or southern France. But about half the women wear the black veil of Islam, and the signs are both in French and in Arabic. These are the stigmata which mark to the visiting eye the basic fact of Lebanese existence: the fact that the Lebanese people are half Christian and half Moslem.

"The Lebanese Government," said the young American pilot with whom I fell into conversation in the hotel bar, "is always doing a tightrope performance. Everything has to be neatly balanced. If the President is a Christian, as at present, then the prime minister must be a Moslem. The Parliament is made up of representatives, not of districts, but of religious communities."

"So many Christians, so many Moslems?" I asked.

"Much more finely subdivided than that," he told me. "So many Greek Orthodox, so many Maronites, so many of other Christian sects. So many Sunni Moslems, so many Shiahs, so many Druse. You'd think that where religion controls politics, there'd be at least honest elections and conscientious public service, wouldn't you? Hah! There are more rackets and political skullduggery in this country than in Hudson County, New Jersey, where I was born."

"You've taken a lot of interest in their politics," I remarked.

"It's all they talk about," he replied. "I've been here a couple of years, off and on, flying to Damascus and Bagdad and Cairo and Cyprus, but making my headquarters in Beirut. I've picked up a little French and a little Arabic. I talk to these jokers going back and forth, and in bars and restaurants and barbershops. You hear a lot of things that way."

"How do they feel about Palestine?" I inquired.

"The Moslems go along with the rest of the Arabs, because they think it's the thing to do and because they think in the end the Arab League will win out," he told me. "The Christians go along with the Arab view for the same reason: they don't want to be left holding the bag after the Arabs have finished off the Jews. I think most Lebanese Christians would really like to see a strong Jewish state established on their southern border. They wouldn't feel quite so surrounded by Moslems, quite so alone. But most of 'em don't dare say so, with a few exceptions like the Maronite Patriarch."

"Are Lebanese volunteers going to fight in Palestine in any numbers?" I asked.

The pilot grinned at me over the top of his beer glass. You can buy a very good Dutch or Danish beer in Beirut.

"A few have gone," he told me. "Some of 'em have come back already, bringing their arms with 'em. The government is getting a little worried about that. They don't want a lot of armed men trickling back into the villages, dissatisfied and perhaps inclined to make trouble."

"Any of these volunteers Christians?" I wanted to know.

The pilot's grin broadened.

"Not many of those who have really gone," he said. "The way the Christians work it is this: In a certain village, let us say, there is a fine strapping Christian youth named John. His family runs a store. They want to stand in well with their Arab neighbors. They want to show that they are solidly supporting the good cause in Palestine. So John volunteers

for the Army of Liberation. There is a great uproar and excitement. John marches down the middle of the village street, surrounded by weeping, howling female relatives, beating their breasts and giving out with piteous shrieks. Oh, our poor boy, we will never see him again! Papa stalks along behind, looking very stern and proud. They come to the house where the volunteer recruiting officer has established himself. John demands that he be immediately enrolled and sent straight off to fight the Jews in Palestine. Papa gives his consent. The women howl some more. All the local Arabs crowd around, with admiring exclamations and favorable comment. John is a true son of the Lebanon. Okay, says the recruiting officer, but first of all just step next door and let the doctor look you over.

"The whole mob shifts to the doctor's house. The doctor comes out on the front porch with his stethoscope and so forth. He makes John take off his shirt. He gives him the business—eyes, teeth, blood pressure. Everything fine. Then he claps on the stethoscope. He listens. He looks startled. He frowns, he listens again and shakes his head. He bends down and really listens good, front and back. Then he lays a hand on John's shoulder. 'My poor boy,' says he, 'how can I find words to tell you this awful news? How can I be the messenger of so cruel a disappointment?' 'Why, what's the trouble, doctor?' asks John. 'Yes, yes,' cries Papa. 'What's wrong?' 'Alas,' says the doctor, 'your son has a heart murmur that indicates he is totally unfit for service in the field. I cannot bear to dampen his noble ardor for the battle against our enemies, but my conscience would not permit me to pass him as fit for military duty.'

"There is a big scene, with all stops out—John protesting furiously, Papa stamping about and saying the doctor must be mistaken, his boy has always been strong and well, the neighbors clucking sympathetically, the female relatives be-

ginning to dry their tears, the doctor standing firm and shaking his head. After a while they break it up. John goes dejectedly home, dragging his feet in the dust. Papa trails along with the women, trying to console the poor fellow. The doctor goes back into his house and counts over again the fifty pounds Papa slipped him the night before."

I might add that this isn't so big a take as it sounds. The Lebanese pound, at the current rate of exchange, is worth about thirty-five cents.

Next day I went to visit the American University of Beirut. The campus looked like any American college campus: kids strolling about or sitting on benches, football training in progress (soccer, not American football), trees and lawns and gravel walks, dormitories and study halls and professors' houses. There were not many coeds in evidence, but there were a few: no veils. I asked Mr. Crawford, the acting president, about fraternities and sororities. Right there I began to get the non-American touches.

"We had to cut out all student societies," he told me. "They inevitably turned out to be political clubs and started trouble."

"You mean over the Palestine situation?"

"Yes. We sent the Jewish students home some time ago," he added, "that is, the Palestinian ones. It wouldn't have been safe for them to stay. We still have some Jewish students from other countries. They are very anti-Zionist."

I gathered that the general feeling of the university faculty was decidedly in favor of the Arab cause in Palestine. The underlying thought seemed to be that the proposal to establish a Jewish state in Palestine and American policy in connection therewith were upsetting years of effort to promote good relations between Arabs and Americans.

"The Arabs are our friends," Mr. Crawford told me. "We

in the university feel we have made that friendship a real and living thing. They have learned to trust us and to admire us. But now they are turning against us—all because of this wretched business in Palestine.”

The university has certainly done a magnificent job. It is responsible, more than any other single institution or influence, for the slow but steady growth in recent years of an Arab middle class, an educated group of doctors, lawyers, engineers and teachers, who are scattered throughout the Middle East and are everywhere influential in Arab affairs. The university and its American leaders are regarded with respect and affection by thousands of people who have never even seen it. I could not but sympathize with the distress of an American educator who saw the possible disruption of all this great accomplishment by political strife.

I drove from the university to the American Legation to pay my respects to the minister, Mr. Lowell Pinkerton, whom I found to be a thoroughly realistic, able and well-balanced diplomat, a credit to our professional foreign service. He had previously been consul general in Jerusalem, and therefore was completely informed on the background of the Palestine situation.

I took up with him, among other matters, my still pending difficulty about getting a visa for Saudi Arabia, where King Ibn Saud was firmly barring all American reporters since the time a couple of months earlier when he had been seriously embarrassed with his Arab friends by some newsman who had written a piece suggesting that His Majesty was sitting tight, drawing his fat oil royalties and not bothering about the Arab cause in Palestine. His Majesty was still sitting tight and saying nothing, but he wasn't letting any more American correspondents into his domains.

Pinkerton took a dim view of my prospects of getting into Saudi Arabia, but he said he would send a telegram to the



American minister at Jidda, Mr. Childs, and that he would also ask George Wadsworth, our ambassador at Bagdad, to reinforce this request. Finally, he said he thought it might be useful if I talked to some of our oil people.

I told Pinkerton I wanted to see something of the Lebanese Army, and he said he would arrange for the military attaché to introduce me to the commanding general.

I went back to the hotel, and had the hall porter send my note from Azzam Pasha over to the Grand Serai, addressed to His Excellency Riad Solh, the Prime Minister of the Lebanon and a very big wheel in the councils of the Arab League.

In the morning I went with Colonel Quarterman, the military attaché, to Lebanese Army Headquarters to see General Shahaba, who is the commanding general—and the only general—of Lebanon's small army of 3,500 men. He is a Greek Orthodox Christian. The chief of staff, a lieutenant colonel, is a Maronite Christian. As a matter of fact, there is no Moslem officer in the army above the rank of major. The general told me that religion cuts no ice in army promotions, which are, he said, strictly on a merit basis.

The organization, armament and administration are on the French model. There are four battalions of infantry, trained and equipped like the French Chasseurs Alpains, a regiment of cavalry, a few tanks and armored cars and four batteries of field artillery. There is a ski school up in the mountains, and a combat school at which commando-type tactics are taught. The assistant military attaché, Major Meade, had recently been to the ski school and praised it highly. In fact, my whole impression of the Lebanese Army was good. The men were smartly uniformed, well disciplined, and carried themselves with a slight swagger which indicated a proper pride in their outfit. It is, however, an army organized for the specific task of defending the mountainous terrain of Lebanon. I doubt if it is capable of taking

the offensive in, say, Palestine, and I doubt if its Christian commanders would lead it with any enthusiasm toward such a distant and perilous venture.

I was much impressed with General Shahaba. He is a graduate of France's West Point, St. Cyr, and of the French war college (*École de Guerre*). He is building slowly and carefully to have a highly trained, efficient little army. He hopes later on to send some Lebanese officers to U.S. Army schools, but only after a careful examination of just what is needed. There is no Lebanese air force. The general said bluntly that he thought it ridiculous for a little country like Lebanon to try to create air power, and he had no intention of wasting any part of his small budget in trying to do the impossible.

A telephone call from the legation caught me as I was leaving headquarters. The Prime Minister would receive me at noon at the Grand Serai. I went back to the legation first, and Pinkerton detailed the head kavass to go with me as guide and escort. The kavass is an institution peculiar to all embassies and legations in the Middle East, and is a very important personage. He is always magnificently uniformed—this one was in blue and scarlet with much gold lace and a huge crimson sash. When we got to the Grand Serai, we pulled into the big courtyard and the kavass hopped out, opened the door for me, saluted and marched ahead of me into the building. I followed, feeling rather embarrassed. The kavass went up a broad flight of stairs and along a hall, which was full of people coming and going. Loud cries of "Effendi! Effendi!" arose as the kavass made his appearance. Everyone stood aside. I was bowed into a small antechamber, and a moment later into the Prime Minister's office.

Riad Solh, a plump and genial gentleman wearing the red fez which is the inevitable mark of the Moslem male in Lebanon (and elsewhere), rose to greet me and put himself out to be pleasant. He spoke French, but no English. My French is

capable of improvement, but I did my best. I tried the Prime Minister on the truce-for-Jerusalem idea. He promptly said he was in favor of it and would support it at the Arab League meeting, for which he was flying to Cairo the next day. Of course he handed out the standard Arab line about a unitary state in Palestine, with local self-government for the Jews. He said he thought the United States ought to cultivate Arab friendship, because we would need Arab support in case of a war with Russia, when we would find it essential to keep the Russians from capturing the vital strategic positions and the oil fields of the Middle East. I asked him if, in case of such a war, Lebanon could expect to remain neutral. He said no, of course Lebanon must be on the side of the Western powers. But it would be easier to do this wholeheartedly, he said, if the United States had taken a different line with regard to Palestine.

I doubt if he really meant what he said about the Jerusalem truce. More than likely he was just following the good old Eastern custom of saying what he thought his listener would like to hear. He is a smooth politician and, I think, able. He was in jail a long time under the French regime, as a "dangerous" agitator for Lebanese independence.

I asked him about the Taplines deal. Taplines is the local nickname for Trans-Arabian Pipe Lines, the American company which is going to build the lines that will carry Saudi Arabian oil to the Levant coast, and thus make unnecessary the long tanker haul from the Persian Gulf all the way around the Arabian peninsula and up through the Red Sea and the Suez Canal. The construction of the pipe line and the building of the terminal at Beirut have been held up by the Syrian and Lebanese governments, allegedly due to "popular agitation" over America's attitude in favoring the partition of Palestine. Riad said that as far as the Lebanese Government was concerned, the matter was all straightened out, but that

unfortunately the Syrian Parliament had not yet ratified the agreement with Taplines, so that for the moment the work could not proceed. I pointed out that the U.S. Government was no longer backing partition, but was now in favor of a U.N. trusteeship for Palestine. The Prime Minister said yes, he knew that, but there was now a tendency to wait and see just what trusteeship might mean and how it would work out.

I wanted to talk to the Taplines people, but that afternoon I heard that Fawzi Bey el Kawukji, the commander of the Arab Liberation Army, would be in Damascus the next day. So I decided to go to Damascus that afternoon and come back to Beirut later. There is a regular taxi service, and I had no trouble getting a seat in a big car carrying eight passengers.

The drive over the mountains was beautiful, if I could have taken my mind off the way the Lebanese driver went round curves with a five-hundred-foot drop so close at hand. Part of the way a little narrow-gauge "cogwheel" railroad paralleled the road. There is no customs examination at the frontier except for cargo trucks, and passports are scarcely glanced at. In a little over two hours we were rolling into Damascus.

The Lebanese are fond of saying that when you go from Lebanon into Syria you go from Europe into Asia. There is some truth in this. Damascus is certainly a Moslem city, with its mosques and minarets, Bedouin tribesmen in the streets and donkey carts plodding along among the motor traffic. There are, however, plenty of modern buildings, and the Orient Palace Hotel gave me a better room than I had in Beirut. I found an American sergeant waiting at the hotel to take me to the apartment of the American military attaché, Colonel McGrath, who told me that the report about Fawzi being in town was a false alarm. The chargé d'affaires, Bob Memminger, and his wife came for dinner; Memminger was feeling pretty happy because he had just that day received

notice that he'd been promoted to be a foreign-service officer, Class III, which is something like being made a colonel in the army—a tough grade to make.

I inquired about the possibility of driving down to Nablus to see the Arab Liberation Army, and found that the chances were not very good. Fawzi has a house in Damascus and sometimes comes there, but just at present he was said to be laid up with the combined effects of an old head wound and a severe sinus condition. So it looked as though I wouldn't be able to get to Nablus either from the Jerusalem end or the Damascus end. However, McGrath said he would have me driven out to the Qatana camp the next day. Qatana is about twenty kilometers southwest of Damascus. It is the camp where the volunteers from Syria and Iraq were organized into units and given a little rudimentary training before being sent to Fawzi's army in Palestine.

McGrath said he had heard reports that heavy fighting had broken out along the road between Jerusalem and the sea, which I thought might mean that the Haganah was at last making a major effort to open that road and keep it open. That could also account for the lack of definite information as to Fawzi's whereabouts. He might be busy.

I went next morning to the presidency, with Memminger, to sign my name in the visitor's book: a ceremony expected of all foreigners arriving in Damascus. Then I went to call on the Syrian minister of defense, Achmet Bey Sharabati, a graduate of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Sharabati proved to be quite a character. He seems to have boundless energy, and he is said to be the spark plug of the Arab League's military planners, and Fawzi Bey's principal encourager and supporter in League councils. He speaks excellent English and is by no means reticent as to his plans and expectations.

"It doesn't make any difference what I want or think about

Palestine," he told me. "The feeling in this country is such that if I did not do my very best to support this great Arab movement for an Arab Palestine, I'd be lynched. And I don't want to be lynched." He paused. "I'd like you to print that," he added.

He was not much in favor of a truce for Jerusalem, said—as usual with Arab leaders—that it would favor the Jews. But he did see the point I made that to consent to it would have a good effect on foreign opinion. He agreed, surprisingly enough, with Azzam Pasha's acknowledgment of Jewish military ability. But he said the Arabs would never quit trying, and that they would win in the end.

When I asked him why Arabs and Jews had never sat down around a table to discuss their differences, he said it was because the Jews would sit only as equals, and the Arabs could not recognize them as such, because that would be recognizing their claim to sovereignty. But he added that he personally thought such a conference might be useful, and that in fact he was going to recommend that it should be considered.

I thought Sharabati was a little on the loudmouthed side. He has a profitable motorcar agency (Chevrolet, I think, though I am not sure) and several other irons in the fire. He is married to a Latvian wife, who is said to be charming and to have Sharabati very much under her thumb. He almost failed to be re-elected to Parliament in the last campaign because of the opposition of the fanatical Moslem Brotherhood, who dislike him (a) because he is married to a Christian woman, (b) because he committed the horrible crime of putting the Syrian Army in shorts—a shocking display of Moslem legs, in the opinion of the Brotherhood.

The Brotherhood, incidentally, is quite strong in Syria, especially in the northern part of the country—Homs and Aleppo—where most of the volunteers for Palestine come from. They are extreme reactionaries: if they had their way,

Syria would go right back to the oxcart and the mutton-tallow lamp.

During the next day or so I saw something of the Syrian Army. It was nothing to get excited about. There were six infantry battalions, eight squadrons of horse cavalry, a handful of tanks, perhaps twenty armored cars, four batteries of old-style 75-mm. guns—perhaps fifteen thousand men all told, of whom with a great effort perhaps six to eight thousand could be put into the field at one time. The chief of staff is a nice old boy who was completely confused by the last war, when the Vichy French were driven out of Syria by the British and Free French under “Jumbo” Wilson. He isn’t quite sure the war ever really happened, and if it did it was just an episode to be disregarded by a good honest soldier who knows that wars are still won by cavalry charges. Most of the senior officers of the Syrian Army are of this school of thought—they have to be to hold their jobs, and anyway it is more comfortable than hard study to learn new ways of doing things.

The weapons of the Syrian Army are mostly surplus French and British material, left behind after the evacuation of the country. The small arms are French, and there isn’t much ammunition.

The Syrian Air Force has twenty AT-6 American training planes, each of which has been fitted with small bomb racks under the wings and each has one fixed machine gun. Sharabati expressed furious indignation because three additional machine guns per plane, ordered in the United States, had been held up by the President’s embargo on the shipment of arms to the Middle East. The planes are said to be in fair condition, and most of them are flyable.

My trip to Qatana was made in a legation car—a black Chevrolet with which I was to become much more closely acquainted later on—driven by the assistant military attaché,

Major M. A. Sanderson, a tall cheerful lad with whom also I was to become much more closely acquainted.

On the way out we passed a truck loaded with Iraqi volunteers in orange kaffiyehs—the Arab soldier's headdress, which consists of a cloth tied round the head and falling down behind over the neck and shoulders. Sandy said the Iraqis didn't come into town as much as they had formerly done. It seems they had some trouble with the local shopkeepers, who, following immemorial custom, had boosted their prices for the visiting soldiery. This had occasioned a few unpleasant incidents.

"We'll circle around so we don't seem to be coming from Damascus," Sandy said. "We'll say, when we come to the camp, that we've been to Quneitra and are going to Beirut. We'll be on the right road for that. You see," he went on, "officially the camp doesn't exist. That's why McGrath told you not to ask Sharabati for permission to visit it. You would only have embarrassed him. It just isn't supposed to be here at all. If the Syrian Government ever acknowledged openly that a Syrian Army camp was being used to process and forward volunteers to fight in Palestine, some very awkward questions could be asked at Lake Success."

We turned off the main road, after passing the airport, and rolled along for some miles. Then we came to a sign on which the word "Qatana" in Roman characters was visible. We turned again, and a few moments later passed a platoon of some forty men drilling on a side road. We went over a little rise, and there was the camp. It was a huge affair, with scores of Nissen huts and other buildings. The British had used it for their principal cantonment while they were occupying Syria.

We rolled up to a road block, manned by perhaps half a dozen men. A noncommissioned officer, eying the American



flag fluttering on the fender, came over and asked to see our papers. The sergeant who was our interpreter told him the tale about our being bound from Quneitra to Beirut. Several other soldiers came running up, perhaps twenty in all.

There was no one else in sight.

I took note that one of the sentries was armed with a brand-new Lee-Enfield rifle of the latest model. He could have got that, I thought, only from Iraq. The noncommissioned officer hummed and hawed. (He didn't quite dare to hold up a car with that flag) and with diplomatic license plates, and he didn't quite dare to let us go ahead.

Finally he stood back and waved us on. We rolled slowly along the road, as slowly as we dared to drive. The great camp was deserted.

"Day before yesterday," Sandy said, "there were at least two thousand men here, and at least fifty motor trucks and other vehicles. Now they're gone. I wonder——"

"Fawzi has called for reinforcements, that's plain," I said. "He's in trouble."

"I'd like to go down into Palestine and find out what's going on," said Sandy.

"So would I," I agreed.

We came back into Damascus by the Beirut road, and I dined with Sandy at his little house, which he shared with one of the civilian staff of the legation. We talked wistfully about making a quick trip into Palestine, but there seemed little chance that we could get away with it.

I began to like Sandy very much.

In the morning I drove back to Beirut with the Memmingers and went to call on the Taplines public relations man, a Mr. Campbell. With him I found the big shot of Taplines public relations, Bill Lenahan, who had negotiated all the various pipe-line agreements with the Syrian, Lebanese and Transjordan governments. He didn't seem to have much

hope of early action by the Syrian Parliament, at least not until the Palestine situation has been worked out, but he confirmed Riad Solh's statement to me that in Lebanon there are no further legal obstacles. However, Syria blocks the way and nothing can be done until Syria gives Taplines the green light. The bulk of the men and equipment have been shifted to Saudi Arabia, and work is being carried on at that end of the line.

Lenahan was inclined to be somewhat curt and sarcastic at first, but he gradually warmed up as he discovered that my sole object was to get at the facts, and that I had no prejudices or slants. Like most American oilmen, he is inclined to regard the Zionist movement as something that interferes with business and hence a damned nuisance. I told him of my desire to go to Saudi Arabia. He said it would be difficult, that the King was very much set against any newsmen coming in and he didn't think the royal mind could be budged on that point.

But he did say he thought I ought to go to Amman, capital of Transjordan.

"There'll be something going on there from now on," he said. "King Abdullah is the keyman in the Arab League. You ought to go see him."

Amman was not on my original schedule, but I began to think of it as a possible alternative to a visit to Saudi Arabia.

Next morning, when I went to the airport to take the plane to Bagdad, I was met by Don Wilson, one of Lenahan's assistants, who gave me a letter of introduction to Samir Pasha el Rifai, a former prime minister of Transjordan who could, Wilson told me, open any door in the Transjordan capital for me. That sounded fine, and it turned out to be very true indeed.

## Teheran

*April 13-22, 1948*

FROM Beirut to Bagdad you fly straight across the desert. From Bagdad to Teheran you climb over an enormous wall of mountains to arrive on the Iranian plateau, with the eternal snows of the Elburz range looking down on you.

That wall of mountains divides two worlds—and two anxieties.

West of it, in Lebanon and Syria, men talked of Palestine. East and north of it, in Iran, men talked of Russia.

I stopped overnight in Bagdad and flew on to Teheran the following afternoon. We flew at 18,000 feet and used oxygen part of the way.

At the Teheran airport there was no one to meet me, and the telephone operator, a soldier of the Iranian Army signal corps, spoke only Persian. I rode downtown in a taxi and a bad humor. The latter was not improved when I reached the hotel to find that I had a large dark room, with the toilet on the floor below and the bathroom on the floor above. Also I recalled that I had been specifically warned by George Polk not to use water from Teheran taps, not to drink it or brush my teeth with it or even let it get into my eyes. I began to be unhappy.

I telephoned to the embassy; the man who answered the phone could speak only broken English—very broken. No, the ambassador was not there. No, the first secretary was not there. No, the military attaché was not there. Is there any American officer there? No, all gone. Call tomorrow. Maybe somebody come tomorrow.

The clerk behind the desk said, "They'll all be out at the embassy residence now. That's the chancery you were connected with."

It was getting on toward evening, but I decided to take a chance and drive to the embassy residence. I was resigned to the wretched hotel, but I thought somebody might give me a drink and some ideas as to how I could start to work seeing people the next day. I had quite a lot of letters of introduction from my good friend Hussein Ala, the Iranian ambassador at Washington.

The embassy residence at Teheran lies in the center of a huge walled compound, much of which has been dug up in the course of new construction. As the ambassador subsequently remarked, it looks like an abandoned gravel pit. The taxi rolled past the gate (where an armed policeman regarded me with suspicion), passed a row of small houses and stopped in front of a fairly imposing building. A servant came out.

"You want see Mr. Ambassador? Mr. Ambassador here," he said politely.

I was ushered into a long living room. A tall man, slightly stooped, met me with outstretched hand as I entered. "I'm John Wiley," he said, beaming at me through his glasses. "This is my wife Irena. We're glad to see you and you're staying here with us. That hotel is impossible."

That was my introduction to one of the ablest servants which this Republic possesses in foreign parts, and to his lovely and lively wife—an unreconstructed Polish girl whom he had met in Warsaw in the days before the war. John Wiley, after thirty-three years in the foreign service of the United States, has become a sort of trouble shooter. He gets the tough jobs. He had been only a few days in Teheran, having been transferred from Lisbon after negotiating the Azores air-base treaty. I remembered a remark I had heard in the State Department weeks before: "We've got to have

somebody for Teheran, and we've nobody to send who knows the Middle East. So we'll send Wiley. He's a good competent craftsman, he can manage anything."

Anyway I was out of that miserable hotel, and I could drink the water and wash my face in it, for the embassy has its own well and its own purification plant.

At dinner that night, the ambassador gave me a rough sketch of his first impressions of his new job, and asked me what I was interested in learning about Iran.

"The army and the military missions are my primary objectives," I said.

"Fine," said the ambassador. "We've got two missions here: one with the army under General Grow, one with the gendarmerie under General Schwartzkopf. We'll have the two generals over after dinner and you can talk to 'em."

General Grow, as it happened, was not available, but Brigadier General Norman Schwartzkopf, commanding the gendarmerie mission, turned up with the coffee. He is a short, alert, quick-moving man with a clipped white mustache and a clipped manner. He headed the New Jersey state police at the time of the Lindbergh trial, served in the U.S. Army during the war and had been five years in Iran trying to reorganize the Iranian gendarmerie.

Right at present he was having trouble. One of his major objectives had been to get the gendarmerie taken away from the control of the minister of war and put under the minister of the interior. The army didn't like this at all and was reacting badly. The transfer, like most things in Iran, was not clear cut: it had strings to it, and one of the strings was that the army retained control of the assignment and promotion of the gendarmerie officers. This control had now been used to appoint to the command of the gendarmerie a certain Major General Kupal, who simply refused to do anything Schwartzkopf asked him to.

Unlike most chiefs of U.S. military missions, Schwartzkopf had a "command clause" in his contract: he was supposed not only to advise, but actually to command the Imperial Iranian Gendarmerie. However, he could in present circumstances command only in theory, the difficulty being that his commands were received with smiling assent and simply not obeyed.

The gendarmerie, the general told me, is organized in nineteen regiments, with at least one regiment in each province of the country. Each regiment has one mobile troop with armored cars, one patrol troop (partly motorized, with trucks and other forms of motor transport), and from two to five troops scattered about in platoon or smaller posts. The total strength is about twenty-five thousand officers and men.

Schwartzkopf impressed me as being able, honest and energetic, with a real devotion to his job, but suffering from the series of frustrations which every Westerner who has served the Iranian Government has encountered in one fashion or another. I learned later, from other sources, that he has been fighting graft and corruption, with very little success, all the five years he has been in Iran.

There are, it seems, two major forms of graft in the Iranian gendarmerie. One, which is also found in the army, is the cumulative "take," by which each corporal collects a few rials from each private of his squad every payday; each sergeant in turn collects a larger sum from each corporal; each lieutenant—well, it goes right on up to the major general commanding, whose "take" is said to be something really big. This custom Schwartzkopf had succeeded, I heard, in stamping out altogether in one of his nineteen regiments, where he had a really tough and honest colonel. He had driven it underground in the other regiments. But he had been able to do very little about the second form of graft. This is the graft collected by gendarmes from ordinary citizens—from truck drivers on the

road, from villagers taking their produce to market, from any citizen applying for one of the endless permits required to do this or that, and so on and so on.

"Schwartzkopf or nobody else will ever be able to get rid of that kind of thing," my informant remarked, "as long as this government pays its gendarmes one thousand eighty rials a month and expects them to live on it."

One thousand eighty rials is about \$15.00, and it will buy in Iran only about twice what \$15.00 will buy in the States.

Next morning I drove down to the chancery with the ambassador. It is an imposing building, formerly the German Consulate. You still have to tell a Teheran taxi driver to take you to the German Consulate if you want to be delivered at the business office of the United States embassy. I was happily surprised to see the pretty face of Mary Louise Lamme behind the desk of the ambassador's secretary. Mary Louise had been secretary to my old and much-loved friend Frank Knox when he was Secretary of the Navy during the war, and subsequently as a Wave lieutenant had served in the Office of Naval Intelligence. She told me that Major General Robert W. Grow, commanding the U.S. Military Mission with the Iranian Army, was waiting to see me at his office, which was in the Iranian Ministry of War.

General Grow is a steady-eyed, burly soldier with an air of self-confidence and a firm jaw. He led the 6th Armored Division from Normandy to the Elbe, and came out of the war with a fine reputation as a commander. I doubt if he has ever faced a tougher job than the one he has now. I had a long talk with Grow. He is expecting soon to begin receiving the first shipment of arms, to be delivered to Iran under the recent agreement between the United States and Iranian governments. Altogether there will be about ten million dollars' worth; and as most of it is "war surplus" material, billed at about ten per cent of cost, the actual deliveries will amount

to much more than this figure indicates. The weapons which are due to arrive include 105-mm. howitzers, 76-mm. self-propelled guns, P-51 fighter planes, light and heavy mortars, mines, some 50-caliber machine guns, light tanks and a certain number of 40-mm. automatic antiaircraft weapons.

The controlling idea is to provide Iran with a well-armed, highly mobile ground force, covered by a reasonably strong tactical air arm. Such a force might be capable of fighting a delaying action against a Russian invasion and perhaps checking the Russians somewhere deep in the mountains of Iran after their communications become overextended.

This would be a perfectly practicable and reasonable idea, provided: (a) that the Iranian Army will fight; (b) that the Iranian officer corps proves capable of carrying out such a complicated and difficult operation as a steady point-to-point withdrawal in the face of enemy pressure; and (c) that the operation is part of a general plan by which, in due course, American and British forces will come to the help of the Iranians, either directly or by attacking the Russians elsewhere.

There is no certainty as to any of these points. I am not now quoting the views of General Grow, or those of any one American officer. I talked in Iran with many Americans and many Iranians and many who were neither. I saw not a little of the Iranian Army for myself. I formed certain opinions as a result of all this, which I hope will not be attributed to any individual save myself, for they are my own.

I think the Iranian soldier will fight if he is well led, and if he has come to have a confidence in his officers, especially his senior officers, which he does not now have and which they do not now deserve. I think he is tough, hardy, long-suffering and as brave as any other soldier. What he needs is competent, trustworthy, devoted leadership. I don't think he can have that unless by some miracle the corruption which saps



the very soul of Iranian officialdom—and has done so for centuries—can be purged, from the army at least. I see no sign of any such miracle being in prospect.

There are good men, there are honest men, there are devoted men in high places in Iran. But there are not enough of them. The younger officers of the army are competent and hard-working. Alas, by the time an Iranian officer reaches the rank of major he has already become a politician, and he has learned by experience that advancement depends on political connections.

The American Military Mission cannot change this system. It is doing good work. General Grow is an able officer, loyal and energetic. But his position is so difficult as to be almost impossible. The contract between the two governments, under which the mission operates, calls for the performance by American officers of advisory functions in the field of administration only. The Russians constantly press the Iranian Government with complaints about the activities of the two American missions. They accuse the Iranian Government of having handed over command of the Iranian forces to the Americans. They accuse the Americans of turning Iran into a "military base" for the purpose of "attacking the Soviet Union." They charge that air bases are being built where no one has ever thought of building an air base. They produced a solemn charge that American officers were photographing military positions along the frontier, a charge which had for foundation, when investigated, the horrid fact that an American captain had been seen to stand up on the end of a broken bridge and take a snapshot of a group of ruins on the Russian side of the river.

The Iranians are understandably afraid of the Russians. They have good and sufficient reason to be afraid. So the military mission must move carefully: It cannot, for example, under the terms of its contract, undertake the training of the

Iranian Army. Yet when the new material arrives, Iranian officers must be taught how to use it. Just how this difficulty will be got over is not yet clear. I set it down here as one example of the delicate situations with which General Grow and his officers must deal. The minute our officers start to teach Iranian officers how to handle, for example, the 105-mm. howitzers, the Russian ambassador will be hammering on the door of the Iranian Foreign Office with a twenty-page note in his hand full of bitter complaints and veiled threats. But if we don't teach the Iranians how to handle those howitzers, we would do better to leave them at home where somebody does know how to handle them.

Then there is the almost insufferable pride and self-esteem of the Iranian officers themselves. They have to be handled with kid gloves at all times. In order to get one of them to adopt any new idea, he must be tactfully led to believe that he thought it up himself. This is not a condition peculiar to Iran. American officers have encountered the same sort of thing in Turkey and Greece and have overcome it by tact, courtesy, patience and straightforward dealing. But in Turkey there is not the universal corruption that poisons all official dealings in Iran, and in Greece there is a war to fight and therefore a danger to the national security to arouse patriotic feelings which sometimes take precedence over personal ambition or even pride. "In Iran," said one experienced American (not an officer) to me, "you can find yourself sinking in a quicksand when you think you're on firm ground quicker than anywhere else on earth. There is just nothing you can depend on, ever; and what you think you can depend on to-day fails you tomorrow morning."

As for the American and British help to Iran, if the Russians ever do come over the frontier, there are two things to be said: first, that it may never get there in time if the Iranian Army collapses at the first blow, as well it may; and second,

that there exists no combined plan by which even such slender resources as the two powers possess in the Middle East may be used to the best advantage for this or any other purpose. This is a sad and startling fact of which I first began to find evidence in Iran.

After my talk with General Grow, I went to the Ministry of Posts and Telegraphs to arrange for permission to send "press collect" messages over the imperial telegraph system. Mr. Shamlu, the local correspondent of the Associated Press, kindly went along with me to help me through the red tape. I don't know what I would have done without him. First I saw the assistant director of telegraphs and had a cup of tea. Then I saw the director and had a cup of tea. Then I was ushered into the office of the vice-minister and had a cup of tea. Finally, with great ceremony, I was conducted to the presence of the minister himself, and had a cup of tea. At each of these interviews I showed my letters from the Iranian ambassador in Washington, my letter of authority from my paper and press cards from various cable and radio companies. At each, at least half a dozen people were called in, examined everything and talked at great length, with Shamlu contributing a few well-chosen words here and there. Finally the minister—after a lengthy conference with a young man who seemed to regard me with profound distaste and suspicion—rose, smiled, shook my hand and announced, through Shamlu, that everything was arranged. I had spent an hour and a half just getting that one matter fixed up. I began to see what doing business in Iran might be like.

I went back to the chancery, and Miss Lamme told me that the ambassador was going to visit the Shah that evening and had arranged to take me with him; so I had better scoot out to the residence and get fixed up. I scooted.

The furnishings of the "private palace" (which is the palace in which the Shah lives—there are four imperial palaces in

Teheran altogether) are beautiful, but rather stiff and formal. The ambassador, his wife and I were met in the entrance by the minister of court and the master of ceremonies, and ushered into a huge drawing room, where we met the Shah's younger brother, Prince Abdor Reza Pahlavi. I mistook him for the Shah and committed the embarrassing error of addressing him as "Your Majesty," which he smilingly corrected.

A moment later the folding doors through which we had entered were closed. A court official then reopened them with something of a flourish and announced the Shah.

His Imperial Majesty Mohammed Reza Shah Pahlavi, Shah of Iran, is a slender young man with the bearing of one born to authority. That evening he was wearing a dark civilian suit which bore the earmarks of Savile Row. He shook hands with the ambassador, Mrs. Wiley and me, and asked us to sit down around a table at one side of the room. Tea was served, and the Shah talked of military matters—on which he seemed to have sound ideas.

He praised the qualities of the Persian soldier, but emphasized again and again the need for good leadership. I told him General Marshall's scheme for selecting the officers who afterward commanded the American Army in World War II; how Marshall when he first became chief of staff had realized that all his generals were too old for active field duty, and how he had chosen a list of colonels, lieutenant colonels and majors, tried them out in jobs of increasing responsibility and under conditions of great rigor, shifted them about suddenly from post to post, tested and tried them in every way, and how from that list he had gradually weeded out the unfit and had chosen for higher commands names like Eisenhower, Patton, Bradley, Hodges, Simpson, Patch, Eichelberger, Gero, Bedell Smith, Collins and many of the others who had given us the best commanded army in our history. The Shah

seemed much impressed, and said that something like that would have to be done with the Iranian Army.

He appeared to have no illusions as to the possibility of defending all of Iran or of holding the frontier. He said that if the Russians came, the Iranians would have to fall back into the mountains, where he would raise his standard and rally the army about it. His eyes flashed—he seemed rather to fancy himself in that role. I'm sure he would try to do it if the need arose, and that he can do it if anyone can.

The energy and competence of the young Shah are Iran's best hope for the future.

While we were talking, the Princess Ashraf, the Shah's sister, whom I had met in New York a few months earlier, came over and sat down with us. She is a girl of dark and striking beauty, with one of the most magnificent figures I have ever seen. Like the Shah she speaks excellent English. Her sister, the Princess Djams, also very lovely, came with her.

The Shah then rose and asked us if we would like to see a new motion picture displaying Persian art in technicolor, which he was about to have shown in his private projection room. We all went down a flight of marble stairs and into the projection room. It was furnished with the most comfortable chairs in which I have ever sat to see a movie. Ashraf sat next to me and explained some of the finer points of the picture. Unfortunately for me the sound track was in Persian, so I needed a little help. The picture was in three parts, devoted respectively to architecture, painting and rugs. It was flawlessly done.

During one of the intervals between reels, refreshments were served, and as the trays of little cakes were being passed, a full-grown tiger strolled into the room through a curtained doorway. There was a slight stir. The Shah spoke a sharp word. One of the servants walked over to the tiger and gave it a hearty kick in the stern. The tiger slunk hastily out

through the door by which it had entered, pulling in its backside as it went.

"It is quite harmless, just a pet," murmured one of the officials sitting behind me. The conversation, temporarily suspended, grew feverishly animated.

The beautiful pictures came on again—a mosque in Isfahan, magnificent in blended colors. "This is quite old," said the Princess Ashraf. "From the time of Nadir Shah."

Nadir Shah, the conqueror of Kabul and Delhi—Iran had been a great power then. But now? Would the Iranian tiger slink away from the toe of the Russian boot? I could not get that thought out of my mind.

We went upstairs again when the pictures were finished. The Shah spoke to us all politely and left the room, since none of us could make a move to go home until he had done so. Princess Ashraf asked the Wileys and me to come to supper informally at her own palace on Sunday evening. We went back to the embassy to dine and talk.

The next morning General Grow took me to call on General Razmara, chief of staff of the Iranian Army. He is a slender, sharp-faced man, clever and, by reputation, ambitious. He talked quite freely of strategical matters, illustrating his points with little sketches, which he let me take away with me after tearing the general staff insignia from the tops of the sheets.

He was very definite about his desire to put the gendarmerie back under the army, and he seemed to have a good reason for this. He pointed out that in the provinces the general commanding the troops is looked to by all the people, and particularly by the tribesmen who make up one third of Iran's population, as the representative of the Shah and the man who is responsible for keeping order. "You can," he said, "appoint as many civil governors as you like. The Shah and the Majlis (Parliament) can endow them with plenary au-

thority—on paper. But the people will still look first of all to the military governors, the generals commanding districts. It has always been so, and while it would be foolish to say it will always be so certainly it is too deep-rooted a custom to change in my lifetime. That is why I think the generals should have control of all the forces charged with maintaining public order, including the gendarmerie.”

He expressed some anxiety about conditions on the Iranian shore of the Caspian Sea, where, it seems, the Russians have a concession under which they have the right to exploit the fisheries of the whole region, including the rich caviar trade. After expenses are met, the profits are supposed to be divided equally between the two governments, but the Russians do the bookkeeping, and so far there has been nothing left over for Iran’s share. What Razmara especially did not like was the fact that under the fisheries treaty the Russians have the right to maintain “inspectors” at no less than thirty-five places along the Iranian coast. These people, he said, had been working on the laboring classes in these towns. He had had to declare martial law in three places, and might have to extend it still farther.

These two matters, I learned later on, were being used by Razmara’s critics as examples of his ambition. Why does he want to control the gendarmerie? Why does he want to extend martial law in the coastal towns? Ha, another man on horseback who wants to emulate Reza Shah!\* These were the whispers that anyone could hear who cared to listen. They illustrate the difficulty of accomplishing real reforms in Iran. Every move is met with jealousy and suspicion, rooted in a history of intrigue which goes back so far that the memory of man runneth not to the contrary.

General Razmara pointed out how easy it was for the Rus-

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\* Father of the present Shah. He began life as a private soldier and made himself ruler of the country by sheer force of will and ruthless determination.

sians to make trouble with the tribes on the frontier. On the northwest, the Kurds, and on the northeast the Turkomans, live on both sides of the border. The Russians select bright young men from the tribesmen on their side of the frontier, educate them and train them as Communist agitators and send them among their compatriots to preach the idea of unity—which of course means a Kurdish "Soviet Republic" and a Turkoman "Soviet Republic," each including large chunks of Iranian territory.

It appears that the Kurds may be divided roughly into three groups: the Jellali Kurds, living astride the frontier, who are pretty generally pro-Russian; the Shikkak Kurds, members of the principal confederacy of Kurdish tribes, who don't trust the Russians but also dislike the Iranians; and the Barzani Kurds, living chiefly in northern Iraq, whose chieftain is now in exile in Soviet territory. (How he got there is a long story, and has been told elsewhere better than I can tell it.)

It is notable that many of the Shikkak Kurds live on the Turkish side of the Turk-Iranian border. If the Shikkaks were well armed and as well organized as it is possible for Kurds to be, they would be well placed on the flank of the best Russian route for the dreaded drive southward toward the oil fields. Russian efforts among these people have not been particularly successful. They hate the Turks, and they despise the Iranians. Such American travelers as have gone into their country have found them hospitable and on the whole friendly. There is something here worth thinking about, as we begin to learn the intricacies of the great task of making the Middle East secure against Russian aggression.

I lunched that day with Colonel Bill Sexton, the military attaché of the embassy. I ought to point out that the American ambassador at Teheran does not take his military advice from either of the two chiefs of the U.S. military missions ac-



credited to the Iranian Government. They advise the government. The ambassador is advised, on military matters, by his military attaché.

Sexton was about due for relief, having completed his tour of duty in Iran. He was most thoroughly informed on conditions, military and otherwise, in the country. Going to his house, I found out why the water in the city water system is undrinkable. Down the side of the street ran an open conduit. Water from this stream is drawn off into tanks in the cellars of the houses for family use. As it runs along the street, you can see a woman washing her husband's filthy shirt in it, a little farther along a couple of kids are wading, and a dead cat floats merrily past. Whenever it rains all the filth of the street washes over the brink. These are the milder things that happen all day every day to the Teheran water supply.

"It's a wonder," said Sexton, "that the whole population isn't wiped out by disease. They seem to thrive on that water. I suppose, if someday we induce the government to put in a properly filtered water system, they'd all die off like flies."

In the evening Sexton, Mary Louise Lamme and I went out to sample Teheran night life. We had cocktails at one of the two main hotels, an indifferent dinner at another and wound up at the Pars Night Club, where we saw a pair of Russian dancers who were quite interesting and certainly very active. There were no knife fights in the Pars on this occasion, which I was told was rather remarkable.

I had hoped, the following day, to make a flight to Tabriz, capital of Azerbaijan, the frontier province which had been almost taken over by the Russians and from which the Russians had withdrawn only under very strong United Nations pressure. General Razmara had given his permission and had detailed an Iranian officer to accompany me. The flight was to be made in the air attaché's plane. I don't know what our

embassies and legations in the Middle East would do without these official airplanes which are at their disposal.

There is literally no other way of getting around in these countries. With the planes, personnel can be transferred from one mission to another, as required for temporary duty; supplies can be procured; officers can be sent to various parts of the country to report on conditions or make investigations. American embassies and legations are very active organisms in these days of American power, American responsibility. There is a vast amount of necessary coming and going at every one of them. For this coming and going the airplanes provide the only workable means.

Also, if, as the saying is, "the balloon goes up," these planes afford the means of evacuating American personnel and their families. In Iran the balloon going up means "if the Russians come." In Syria it means "if the mob gets out of hand and starts to massacre Americans because they think we have helped the Jews." In Cairo it means "if the government loses its grip on the city and all hell breaks loose." In all these countries there is always some sort of "balloon" which might "go up."

So please, Mr. Taber, when you're scrutinizing the budget, don't get too upset because we maintain planes and air officers to fly them at all these little capitals. They are not luxuries, they are necessities. They may indeed be the necessities of life for a lot of faithful servants of Uncle Sam.

Well, to get back to my hoped-for trip to Tabriz. I was called on the telephone early in the morning by one of the officers of the military mission to be told that the plane was delayed and I could not go that day. So instead I went to visit the military school, which is divided into two departments under a single command. One is the cadet school where young men desiring to become second lieutenants are trained for three years; the other is the staff college for the

higher education of officers of the army. I thought the curriculum for the cadets gave too much time to military and not enough to academic subjects. The buildings and plant seemed in excellent condition. There was a communications school at which a special class of noncommissioned officers was undergoing instruction. The pride of the military school is its museum of weapons, which occupies a whole floor of the main building. I have never seen anywhere so complete a collection of small arms of every conceivable type, from ancient spears and war clubs right down to every make and caliber of modern rifles, automatic pistols and light automatic team weapons. Furthermore, the curator in charge knew all about every item in the collection, and it was obviously a labor of love for him to explain them to visitors—which he could do in about six languages, luckily including English.

In the afternoon I went to visit the 1st Division, which occupies a huge cantonment on the edge of the city of Teheran. The commanding general accompanied me in person through the division area, and I must say I was impressed by the cleanliness, good order, discipline and careful arrangement of the internal economy of the units.

The kitchens, for example, were spotless, the cooks and kitchen police wore clean white aprons, the pots were scrubbed bright, the floors were clean, garbage containers properly covered, windows screened, storerooms neatly arranged with every commodity properly labeled. I may seem to be laboring small details, but it has been my experience that the inspection of any command should begin with the mess, and if the mess is well run there is every chance that the whole outfit is well run.

The guardroom was clean, too, and the guard turned out smartly for the general and presented arms with real snap. I didn't much like the cells for prisoners: they had solid

wooden doors with no opening except a small peephole, and no windows. On a mild spring day such as this, I thought, they must be uncomfortable; what they would be like in the blazing heat of summer on the Iranian plateau, I didn't want to think about.

Instruction was being carried on all over the division area. The tanks of the armored battalion were under their shed, attended only by mechanics, who proudly showed me their mobile repair unit—of Czech manufacture, and a very good one. The men were outside, the detail for the day being apparently the stripping and reassembling of machine guns. Some of the men, however, were being taught to read and write, an essential preliminary to further instruction for a large percentage of Iranian recruits.

In the infantry area there were many groups of recruits undergoing ordinary foot drill or learning the manual of arms. There were also several groups being taught the parts and nomenclature of the rifle, and two or three groups of aspirant noncommissioned officers learning the details of the automatic rifle. I thought the sergeants who were instructing seemed reasonably good, and they were being carefully supervised by several officers who strolled from group to group. I saw engineer and signal units receiving instruction in the use and care of various details of their equipment.

On one parade ground of this vast area a battalion of the Bahadur Infantry Regiment was drawn up under arms, with full field equipment. There were three rifle companies, a machine-gun company with six mule-carried machine guns and a headquarters group. The basic infantry weapon is the Iranian rifle, which with its ammunition is locally manufactured. Each squad had an automatic rifle. There were no mortars, which in the Iranian Army are not a battalion but a regimental weapon. The men seemed in excellent physical condition. They were not overloaded, and their packs seemed

workmanlike. Proper attention had been given to fitting the pack carriers, as I took occasion to test. This is another small indication of the competence of junior leadership in any army.

There is no horsed cavalry in this division, but I saw the artillery and transport stables, which were large, airy, light and clean. I did not see much of the field-artillery units, which were out on a route march, except for one horse-drawn battery which I saw at mounted drill. The hospital was in good shape. I saw several barracks rooms, kept in excellent order. There were no mess halls. Each squad has a mess table in its own quarters, where the men eat.

Of course I knew that this was a show staged specially for my benefit. Indeed, the 1st Division is the show division of the Iranian Army; the troops stationed in the provinces do not keep up quite the same standards, though American officers who have visited them speak favorably, on the whole, of their discipline and internal arrangements. But no division which is not of good quality in these respects can put on such a show at a moment's notice, or a week's notice for that matter.

The unanswered question remained in my mind: is it all spit and polish, or is there fighting spirit here too?

I could not forget that it was this same 1st Division which had disintegrated, literally dissolved, at the first hint of fighting when the old Shah had wished to defend his capital against the British and Russian invading columns in 1941.

"But then," said an American lieutenant colonel to me later, when I voiced my doubts, "then it was hopeless to resist. Your Iranian is a practical fellow. He sees no reason why he should die for any such intangible matter as old Reza Shah's pride. As for regimental *esprit de corps*, the honor of the regiment and all that, which with our men or the British will hold the show together under pretty tough going, it just

doesn't exist here for the reason that the character and conduct of the senior officers don't build it up. In the Iranian Army, as in every other army, the soldier knows his officer. When he knows that his colonel is a politician who belongs to a group which is secretly intriguing with the Russians, or the British, or the peace-at-any-price party, what confidence can he feel that he will be well led when he goes out to fight? What, in fact, would he be fighting for? In the invasion of 1941 he just went home, and I don't blame him. Furthermore, he knew from the start that he'd be fighting against hopeless odds."

"Does he still think so, Colonel? Would he think so if the Russians came?" I asked.

"I don't know," my friend said slowly. "His officers haven't improved much, as far as politics goes, but there are not very many of them these days who can be said to be intriguing with the Russians, or the Russian-controlled Tudeh Party. Those lads have been pretty well weeded out. As for the hopeless odds, remember that in 1941 it was a back-to-the-wall, sell-your-lives-as-dearly-as-you-can proposition. Today your Iranian soldier sees all these American officers here to advise and help him. He will presently see a lot of American equipment. He gets the idea, we may hope, that he isn't alone in the world with nobody to fall back on. He knows he has a powerful friend who can come to his help after a while. I hope he doesn't think we can come too soon. But under those conditions maybe he will fight."

"If he gains some confidence in his leaders," I put in.

"Yes—and that is a matter where the young Shah can count a good deal. If he could start a weeding-out process based not on politics or personal connections, but on efficiency and loyalty, there is enough officer material in the army to fill the higher ranks with good people" was the reply. "The Shah is not all-powerful, however. He is dependent to a considerable

extent on the advice of others, and not all the advice he gets is good. He's a hard-working, able young man, though, and he can make up his mind pretty fast when he wants to. He has good soldierly instincts. Maybe he'll get around to a real cleanup in the army one of these days."

"And on that basis, even with the existing uncertainties, our effort and material expended on this mission aren't wasted," I observed.

Somehow I felt better after this talk. It was a relief from the constant pessimism I'd heard expressed all over the Middle East about Iranian ability to resist a Russian drive. Even though it was a highly qualified and tenuous relief, it offered a small gleam of hope.

I went to Bill Sexton's house that night for dinner and bridge. The uniform of the evening was "black tie," and as I was traveling strictly within my 30-kilogram air-line baggage limit (including typewriter) I had no dinner jacket with me. However, the ambassador's number-two outfit proved to be a perfect fit.

General Razmara was there, and we had another long talk.

The chief of staff was bubbling with optimism over the coming arrival of the American military material.

"In two to four weeks after we get that material," he said, "we'll be in good shape."

I wondered whether he really thought I was such a dope as to swallow that one, so I let him have it.

"Excuse me, sir," I said, "but I think that's a slight underestimate. In the first place, considering the capacity of your ports and your railway, and the shortage of motor transport and good roads, it will take you something like a year to get all this material landed, inspected and distributed to the places where you want it. Then it will take another year for American officers and men to instruct a reasonable number of Iranian instructors in its use, care and maintenance. After

that you can begin real field training with it. Of course these aren't rigidly divided periods; some instruction can begin during the first year. But it will be two years at best before you can begin to say that the rearmament of the Iranian Army has taken tangible shape, in terms of combat effectiveness."

Razmara scowled at me. "We can do better than that. Much better. Two to four weeks. Our people are very clever about mechanical things," he insisted.

"So are ours, sir," I replied, "and in the last war it took us a full year of intensive training and intensive production before we could put our National Guard into the field with full equipment."

Razmara went on talking along the same lines. I gathered that he had some vague idea that he might get the equipment and then get rid of the American mission. But I don't think he really would do that if it came right down to it. He was speaking rather from a sense of pride, or perhaps of irritation at feeling himself in leading strings.

On the following day I was asked to lunch by General Grow to meet the officers of his mission—some twenty of whom were present, though the mission is to be increased to thirty officers and twenty enlisted men. The lunch was really given for the ambassador, who was to make a short address to the officers. Much to my surprise, General Grow called on me to speak on the subject of the military situation in Palestine, which I did. Then the ambassador talked with considerable effectiveness on his idea of the relations which should prevail between the mission and the embassy. The officers were visibly impressed with his good common sense and his clear grasp of the difficulties that lay ahead.

As for the impression I made, I was told afterward by an officer who was not present that one of my hearers had asked him whether I was a Zionist agent. Since I had carefully avoided any partisan viewpoint, and indeed any political dis-



cussion at all, confining myself strictly to military matters, I could only conclude that my opinion of the good qualities of the Haganah had come as rather a shock to at least one American officer.

During my stay in Teheran I had two other very pleasant luncheons, one with General Schwartzkopf and the officers of the gendarmerie mission; the other as the guest of the Iranian minister of war, General Yazdan Panah, a fine old soldier, at the beautiful Officers' Club. It was immediately after this latter affair that General Grow drew me aside.

"Your trip to Tabriz is out," he said. "Sorry, but the plane is held up." His eyes sparkled with irritation.

One of the civilian officers of the embassy told me next day what had occasioned this disappointment for me.

"We were sending three Iranian Army officers to the United States," he explained, "to attend a course of instruction in army schools. The only way to get them there in time was to fly them in the embassy plane to the U.S. Air Force base at Dhahran, on the Persian Gulf, where they could be transferred to a plane of the Air Transport Command. In doing this there was a delicate diplomatic question involved, for Dhahran is in Saudi Arabian territory, and there have been no diplomatic relations between Saudi Arabia and Iran for quite a while.

"A couple of years ago, an Iranian who was making the pilgrimage to Mecca was taken suddenly sick to his stomach when he was right in front of the Kaaba, the Holy Stone, and he vomited on it. He was immediately stabbed and beaten to death by a furious mob of Arabs, to whom he was just a Shiah dog anyway, hardly better than a Christian. Iran broke off relations with Saudi Arabia, and they've never been resumed.

"Well, this was a proposition of taking three Iranian officers into Saudi Arabian territory, and there was a time limit

involved, because the course of instruction these officers are to attend starts in a few days. The Saudi Arabian authorities at Dhahran have never interfered with or even questioned persons arriving or departing on official U.S. planes, and it was just a matter of these three Iranians stepping out of one plane, walking a hundred yards and climbing into another. It didn't seem possible that there could be any difficulty about it, so we went right ahead.

"And then, when the plane was in the air, we found out that the vice-consul at Dhahran—bless his heart—had asked formal permission of the Saudi Arabian Government for this transfer to take place. Well, brother, from then on the fat was in the fire. The Saudi Arabians raised hell. They shrieked about this brutal and unauthorized invasion of Saudi Arabian territory by the military personnel of a foreign power. Orders were issued for the immediate arrest of the three Iranians as soon as they arrived at Dhahran. So we had to turn the plane back to Isfahan, and it's still there, waiting till we get this mess straightened out."

The mess never did get straightened out as far as Saudi Arabia was concerned. In the end the three Iranian officers were flown to Cairo, where they boarded the A.T.C. plane for the States. And I didn't get to go to Tabriz. I could have gone in an Iranian plane, but at that time the standards of maintenance of the Iranian air force were such that American personnel, military and civilian, were not permitted to fly in Iranian aircraft.

I was sorry to miss seeing the famous frontier province of Azerbaijan, the front door of Iran where the Russians press strongly against a weak frontier. Azerbaijan may be the gateway for the Russian invasion of the Middle East, if that invasion ever comes. The people of Azerbaijan are rather a mixed lot. Many of them speak Turki, a language akin to Turkish, instead of Iranian, and the Russians have done their

best to arouse separatist feelings among them. But there seems little doubt that Iranian national sentiments are deeply rooted, even among the Turki-speaking Azerbaijanis, and to these sentiments has been added a violent dislike of Soviet methods and Soviet stooges, resulting from the brutalities of the so-called "democratic" regime under Pishevari, a Moscow-trained Iranian who ruled the province for some time during 1945 and 1946 under the protection of the Red Army.

When the Iranian troops came back after the Russian evacuation and re-established the Shah's authority in Azerbaijan (June 1946) a golden opportunity was afforded the Iranian Government to take advantage of this feeling. Had the government then in office in Teheran had the wit to put a good, capable, honest governor in charge at Tabriz, to carry out reforms and to meet at least halfway the very proper demands and grievances of the peasant population and the Kurdish tribesmen, Azerbaijan would today be the most loyal province of the Iranian crown. But alas, the same old gang of grafters, intriguers and absentee landlords went right back to doing business at the old stand, so that today some Azerbaijanis are beginning to say that the "democrats" weren't so bad after all.

The government in power when I was in Teheran was headed by Prime Minister Ebrahim Hakimi, who was intensely disliked by the Russians. It was recognized as an interim government, since the preceding Prime Minister, Qavam es Sultaneh, is easily the strongest political personality in the country and his friends had long been planning to stage a comeback.

I went to the diplomatic gallery of the Majlis, or Parliament, the day the attack on the government by Qavam's friends began. With me was Gerald Dooher, one of the political officers at the embassy, well acquainted with Iranian politics and a sound authority on tribal affairs. Under his

guidance I was able to follow the proceedings fairly well. The government was being attacked largely on domestic questions, principally graft and failure to reduce taxation. The Majlis meets in a large semicircular chamber, and the deputy addressing the house ascends a tribune at the center of the curve. Behind this speaker's stand is the high desk of the president of the Majlis. It looked for a time, as the Majlis gave evident approval to the attacks on the cabinet, as though the government might fall then and there. But a young deputy who was pointed out to me by one of the embassy translators as being the "Shah's man" rose and left the chamber while the third opposition speaker was on the tribune, and when he returned he went up and spoke briefly to the president of the Majlis.

"They'll adjourn now," said the translator with a grin. "That man has telephoned the palace, and the Shah has sent word that the Majlis is to be adjourned to avoid a vote today. The Shah doesn't want to have to face the job of picking a new government until he has had more time to think things over and to talk with various people."

Sure enough, as soon as the third speaker had finished the president banged his gavel, somebody made a motion to adjourn and the session was over.

It should not be supposed that the Iranian Majlis is a democratically elected body representing the interests and aspirations of the common man in Iran. Some few of the deputies do more or less represent the people of certain urban communities. Others are tribal chiefs—a chief of the Bakhtiari tribe, for example, was pointed out to me on the floor, dressed in well-cut European tweeds—and they for the most part are just feudal lords concerned with maintaining the status quo under which they and their families are wealthy and powerful. Others represent banking or commercial interests, and many of these are from Teheran. And yet others, notably the Azerbaijani deputies, are the representatives of wealthy land-

owners. Yet the Majlis has real power, it functions as a legislative assembly with which the Shah's authority must reckon, and its existence is a step toward Iranian democracy, or at least the broadening of the base of government, even though many more steps must be taken before democracy in Iran becomes a living fact. I am no great authority on Iranian politics, but I think it is a mistake to dismiss the Majlis, as do some observers of Iranian affairs, as merely the instrument by which corruption and reaction maintain their grip on that ancient kingdom.

The Princess Ashraf's supper party that night was pleasantly informal. When it was over, we went back to the embassy, where I took leave of my dear and kind friends the Wileys, for I was departing for Bagdad early in the morning. John Wiley is a wise and able ambassador who will do well in Iran. He plays his cards close to the vest, never says too much, but has a quality of firm decision when needed. There was a story current in Teheran about his first formal visit to the Russian ambassador, Ivan Sadchikov, which I think is probably a true story because it is so typically Wileyesque.

Sadchikov, I should tell you, is one of the new school of Soviet diplomats, one of the young men brought up wholly under the Soviet regime, completely ignorant of the world except as seen through the distortion of party spectacles, believing the party clichés as axioms of self-evident truth, having no conscience save obedience to the party line and the orders of his superiors, no conception of morality whatever as other peoples understand morality.

This leads to a certain lack of mental flexibility, among other things. But to get back to his talk with Wiley, as reported by current bazaar gossip, in a city where even the most private conversations quickly become public property.

After the usual exchange of amenities, Wiley took the offensive.

"Excellency," said he—I can see him looking gravely at Sadchikov under the rim of his glasses—"I feel that I must make some reference at this time to the series of notes which the government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics has thought proper to address to the Imperial Iranian Government, containing certain complaints regarding the alleged conduct of the American military missions in Iran. As a student of Pushkin, Excellency, I find these complaints to be in the best tradition of Russian romantic fiction. As Pushkin so wisely observes, Excellency, one should never permit mere veracity to interfere with the flights of genius."

Poor Sadchikov gulped, stammered and began to talk about his garden, of which he is justly proud. The new Soviet diplomacy is not equipped to deal with a conversation in which the Soviet Government is called a liar by means of quotations from Russia's favorite author. Of course the cream of the jest is that, as Wiley well knew, there was the usual microphone under the table and the inevitable M.V.D. agent in the next room taking down every word that was spoken. No doubt Sadchikov was occasioned considerable embarrassment in reporting to his superiors his sad failure to make an adequate reply.

Wiley followed this up by offering to permit Sadchikov to inspect fully and freely all the activities of the American Military Missions, writing his own ticket as to what he wanted to see, when and how. Of course the invitation was not, and will not be accepted. What the Soviets are interested in is not the facts of the case, but the building up of a propaganda case against Iran, trying to justify some future intervention when the time is ripe. They will not find it easy to do while John Wiley is in Teheran.

Generals Grow and Schwartzkopf and Colonel Sexton came over to have a farewell drink with me that evening at the embassy. Schwartzkopf seemed rather depressed. It was already pretty clear that his gendarmerie mission could not carry on under the existing conditions, and Schwartzkopf felt—quite without reason—that some blame might attach to him in the matter. As a matter of fact it was recognized in Washington that he had done fine work under almost incredible difficulties, as his subsequent transfer to a post of great importance in Germany indicates.

At six the next morning I was awakened by Han, the ambassador's Chinese servant, and by eight I was in the air, headed westward again over the mountains toward Iraq.

## Bagdad

*April 22-26, 1948*

IT WAS a beautiful, flower-rimmed terrace looking out across the swift-flowing waters of the Tigris. A three-quarter moon shone brightly in a cloudless sky. On the opposite bank glowed the myriad lights of Bagdad, the Jewel of the Caliphs, the home of Haroun al Raschid, the City of the Thousand and One Nights.

But I listened in vain for the gentle notes of the nightingale or the tinkling of silver bracelets on the ankles of slender dancing girls. The only sound I could hear was the incessant honking of innumerable American automobile horns.

Perhaps nothing could as well have symbolized the transition of this ancient city from the seat of the caliphs to its present status as capital of the slightly synthetic Kingdom of Iraq.

The British officer who was my fellow dinner guest was leaving Iraq shortly, as the activities of the British military mission were now at an end.

"Do you feel that you're leaving the Iraqi Army in shape to take care of itself?" I asked.

"We've done our best," said the Britisher soberly. "I think many of the officers know their business. We've sent some of them to our schools, even to the staff college. We've worked hard on organization and training. But there's not much real national feeling in the country. Perhaps a little loyalty to the crown—but that's Abdullah, when you boil it down. I don't know whether the army would fight if it came up against a tough situation."



"In Iran," I murmured, "the men seem pretty good, but the officers aren't up to much."

"So I've heard," said the British officer. "But I wouldn't want you to imagine, old chap, that these Iraqi officers are really out of the top drawer. I give you an example. I was talking yesterday to a very senior general, a graduate of our staff college and a lad who can knock your eye out with a map problem involving a couple of army corps. We were talking of this Palestine business, and the general was telling me how the brave Iraqi Army would march down to Palestine and wipe out these pestilent Jews in no time at all. Having had one Martini more than my usual limit, I ventured a slight demur like a silly ass. I began figuring out how many lorries it would take to maintain just one Iraqi division in Palestine, over six hundred miles of desert road and not too good road at that. It ran to more lorries than there are in the whole country. The general drew himself up and gave me a very dirty look. 'Colonel,' he said, 'I'd like you to understand that I am a general staff officer. I am not interested in supply!'"

"How much of a force do you think the Iraqi Army could maintain in Palestine if it tried?" I inquired.

"A brigade at most," he said, "and a weak brigade at that."

Somebody should have presented him with a medal for accurate prophecy, for a weak brigade is exactly what the Iraqis later sent to Palestine as the sum total of their contribution.

The Iraqi Army is said to total about sixty thousand men. I doubt if there are anything like that number present with the colors. My own guess would be around thirty thousand. There are three divisions: the Mountain Division at Kirkuk, which keeps an eye on the turbulent Kurds in the north, the Plains Division at Nasiriya, and the Bagdad Division, which is largely a training establishment, and of which only the Royal Bodyguard (one infantry battalion and one squadron

of cavalry) is ready to take the field. There are some odds and ends of armor, mostly armored cars. The weapons and equipment are, of course, British. The Iraqi Air Force has a few planes of considerable variety. It has just purchased from Britain three squadrons of Furies, a high-performance fighter which, as one R.A.F. officer said, is "a little rich for the blood of these Iraqi pilots." Only a few of the Furies had been delivered when I was in Bagdad. I saw three of them at the civil airfield, where the air-force planes had been moved one morning when the Tigris was rising. The military airfield is likely to be flooded in such circumstances.

The day after I arrived in Bagdad, I flew over to the Royal Air Force base at Habbaniyeh, which is on the Euphrates perhaps half an hour's flight west of the capital. Air Vice-Marshal Gray, the air officer commanding, had kindly invited me to lunch, and I was glad to have a chance to see something of this British outpost in the Iraqi desert. Habbaniyeh is a fine airfield, on level ground and capable of almost indefinite extension. It is the key to the defense of this whole area of the Middle East, a backstop to Iran and the only prepared position now available from which effective air support could be given by British and American planes to Iranian troops defending their mountain passes. What is more, it has a ground-force garrison: R.A.F. "levies," recruited from Assyrian Christians, real fighting men, splendidly disciplined and well armed. A thousand of them defended Habbaniyeh against two Iraqi divisions during the Rashid Ali affair in 1941, and defended it successfully. This is a force which is capable of considerable expansion, as there are many young Assyrians who would like to join.

Habbaniyeh is therefore a position which could be made reasonably secure against sudden attack by air-borne raiding parties, and which could become a first-class, large-capacity air base.

But at present it sits isolated in the desert, its very future insecure because of the strained relations between Britain and Iraq following the denunciation by the latter of the Portsmouth Treaty, its status as a British position due to run out in 1956 when the existing treaty (which was to be replaced by the Portsmouth Treaty) expires. Habbaniyeh could form part, and a very important part, of a concerted American-British plan for the defense of the vital Middle Eastern area. But no such plan exists.

The A.O.C. showed me round the base, which is fully equipped. Afterward we had lunch and walked in his large and delightful garden, a place of brilliant color and the delight of his wife and daughter. Lieutenant Colonel Jim Coward, the air attaché at our Bagdad embassy, flew me back to Bagdad in the afternoon. As we drove past the last Assyrian sentry, very smart in his Australian-type hat and his plume of cock's feathers, on our way to the hangars, I was still thinking of what could be done with this base, with these troops, to make a point of support which in turn would make a lot more sense out of what we were trying to do in Iran.

I went directly from the Bagdad airport to the embassy, for a cocktail with our ambassador, George Wadsworth. The Bagdad embassy is a very beautiful and impressive building, equaled among our Middle Eastern diplomatic establishments only by the embassy in Cairo. I delivered a jar of caviar sent down by the Wileys, and some books for Miss Wendy Wadsworth, a charming girl who acts as hostess for her widower father. The ambassador questioned me closely about conditions in Palestine and ran true to normal form in seeming rather surprised at my high opinion of the Jewish fighting forces. He was somewhat on the defensive about his reputation of being pro-Arab. I think that in his case and that of one or two other high-ranking officers of the foreign service, a sincere conviction that American interests will best be

served by seeking to preserve Arab friendship has been translated by those who are critical of that point of view into an alleged blind partisanship for the Arab cause in Palestine, which I did not find in Wadsworth.

He gave me one piece of bad news—a telegram from Childs, our minister at Jidda, to say that no exceptions could or would be made by the Saudi Arabian Government to the edict banning American reporters from the sacred soil of that kingdom. So I would not be able to see Saudi Arabia, or visit the famous capital of King Ibn Saud at Riyadh. Another disappointment.

Later that evening I went to a garden party at the pretty riverside home of Walter Harris, second secretary at the embassy. On the way we passed a house where a policeman sat in front of the door with a rifle across his knees. "That's a blood feud," I was told. "The man who lives there got married the other day, and now he's proclaiming publicly all over town that his wife was not a virgin when she married him. So her father and her four brothers are gunning for him, and he has asked for police protection. They'll probably get him before long. The cops won't worry too much."

One of Harris' guests was an American oilman just back from Kuwait, a more or less independent sheikdom which lies at the head of the Persian Gulf. Kuwait is enjoying a big oil boom, he said, and added his belief that eventually the royalties of the sheik would surpass those of King Ibn Saud. Just at present, he told us, the sheik is having fits because he can't induce the Rolls-Royce people to build him a car that will be guaranteed to be longer than anything Ibn Saud possesses.

Next day there was a demonstration in Bagdad, which was heralded by an uproar in the street outside the U. S. Information Office, conveniently located next door to my hotel, the Sindbad. I was having a glass of beer at the moment with

Armin Meyer, in charge of the U.S.I.S. and one of the nicest and most helpful American representatives I met in the Middle East. We went to the window and looked out. Merchants were banging down the iron shutters in front of their shops, down the street horns were honking, and a little boy was racing along the sidewalk yelling some Arabic words which Meyer said meant "They're coming! They're coming!" Presently "they" appeared—a couple of hundred youths, with a few girls, carrying banners reading **HELP FOR PALESTINE** and similar slogans. Some carried sticks, the only weapon they had. They didn't look very dangerous. I heard afterward that they went to the Ministry of the Interior and made some noise in the courtyard, whereupon the acting minister came out on the balcony, praised their patriotism and said since they were so justly aroused by the perils of their co-religionists in Palestine, he felt sure that they all would like to volunteer at once. So he would send to volunteer headquarters for a recruiting officer. By the time he had got that far, there were no more demonstrators in sight.

These demonstrations in Bagdad for "something to be done about Palestine" are sometimes more serious, however. A good many people have been hurt in the course of them, and some property damage has resulted. The Jewish community in Bagdad is very nervous, as in all Moslem cities, and has elaborate plans for evacuation, self-defense and so forth. Bagdad Jews are actually afraid to be seen talking to Americans, though a few of the younger ones have been showing some bravado since the recent Jewish military successes at Castel and elsewhere along the Jerusalem highway. One recent custom has been for a few Jews to gather in such places as the bar of the Regent Palace Hotel and laugh loudly and repeatedly over low-voiced talk, glancing meanwhile at such Arabs as may be present. This sort of thing is going to lead to somebody getting hurt, if it doesn't touch off a riot.

And Bagdad is no place for a riot of that sort to start, for the morale of the police force is very low. Last January, when a revolt in the city caused the ousting of Sayeh Saleh Jabr's government over the question of the Portsmouth Treaty, the police, at the orders of the government, fired on a mob of rioters and killed some fifteen of them. When the present government took office, following Saleh Jabr's downfall and flight, they were weak enough to dismiss a number of policemen for thus doing their duty, simply because there were demonstrations demanding that this step be taken.

The new director-general of police, appointed just before I reached Bagdad, has said frankly in private conversation that he expects an anti-Jewish outburst, that he has prepared for it, but that he hasn't the least idea that his men, in their present frame of mind, will risk their lives to stop it.

However, the Bagdad demonstrations appear to be self-starting. At least they are not, like the Palestine demonstrations in Damascus, started by the agents of the government itself in order to give it an excuse for showing its solidarity with the people and its desire to meet the popular demands. Many of the demonstrators are very young. "Wouldn't you, when you were in high school, have preferred to go out and march and yell and break windows rather than sit in a classroom?" Meyer asked me. This has a peculiar effect on the educational process in Iraq, however. During the school year just passed, the schools were open only seventy-five days. The rest of the time they were closed, either for holidays (of which there are plenty in the Iraqi calendar), or for demonstrations, or by the government as punishment for demonstrations.

Communist influence in Iraq is fairly strong, and it is likely that the Communists here as elsewhere are placing the accent on youth. One fourteen-year-old boy is a perfect firebrand, with a genius for making trouble which commands reluctant admiration. He has been in jail twice, but he doesn't stay

there. His friends start demonstrations of so violent a character that the government weakens and lets him out. This boy is undoubtedly the instrument of clever Communist agitators.

The government does not, obviously, feel itself securely in the saddle. It has little relation to the real hopes and feelings of the people, except that it exploited the universal desire to get rid of the British influence for no especial reason except that this influence was foreign and non-Moslem. The Palestine issue, for which the British can be cheerily blamed, is made to order for this Iraqi cabinet. But when Palestine troubles blow over, they will have to find a new excuse for staying in office. The only real center of political power in the country is the palace—that is to say, right now, the regent, Prince Abdul Illah, uncle of young King Feisal II, a lad of thirteen, now at school in England.

Prince Abdul Illah is also the nephew of King Abdullah of Transjordan, head of the Hashemite House. The young regent is said to be much influenced by his astute uncle, whose known ambition is to become the king of Greater Syria—to include Transjordan, Syria and Iraq.

So when I heard that the regent was flying to Amman to visit his uncle, accompanied by the chief of staff and the minister of war, I felt even more strongly than before that I must go to Amman, too, and as soon as possible. Later that day reports came in that there would soon be a conference of all the big shots of the Arab League in Amman. Finally a British friend slipped me the news that an Iraqi brigade had set out to march by road to Transjordan to reinforce Abdullah's army in case an invasion of Palestine were decided on.

Only a little more than two weeks remained before British sovereignty in Palestine would end on May 15. No one knew whether the Arab states would start an invasion before that date, but there was much loose talk of such an event, and

many premature reports. At any rate it was clear that, whatever happened, the king of Transjordan would be the key-man on the Arab side, and Amman the center of action. The best route to Amman lay through Damascus, I discovered.

Jim Coward was flying to Beirut the next morning, to ferry some embassy people going to the States on leave. I begged him to drop me at Damascus, en route, and he kindly consented to do so.

The night before I left Bagdad, I dined at the embassy, and I'm happy to report that Ambassador Wadsworth's spare dinner jacket fitted me almost as well as Ambassador Wiley's, though the pants were a trifle short.



## Damascus Again

*April 26-30, 1948*

THE emphasis of interest, as reflected in the local press or local conversation, shifts with geography in the Middle East. Iraq lies between Iran and Syria, there is some talk there of Russia, more of Palestine. Back in Syria, Palestine becomes the burning issue, Russia is forgotten.

Major Sanderson was at the Damascus airport to meet me. Colonel Shipp, the military attaché at Bagdad, who had been most kind to me there, had come along to have a talk with Colonel McGrath. We all drove to the legation together.

I had lunch with Sandy at his house, and we talked over the local situation, which did not appear to be much improved. The news from Palestine was news of Jewish victories, in the somewhat limited fighting of these days before the British evacuation. Fawzi el Kawukji was no less of a hero in Syrian eyes than he had been before, but there was beginning to be an uneasy feeling that something was going wrong somewhere. As a matter of fact, though we did not then know all the details, Fawzi had been soundly defeated at Mishmar Haemek on April 15 by two battalions of the very Haganah brigade I had seen at Natanya, and, as a direct result, the great seaport city of Haifa had fallen into Jewish hands on the twenty-second, except for the port and railway area, reserved by the British for their evacuation purposes. Needless to say, the Syrian press was not giving out with the facts on these matters. The legation radio bulletin was the best source

of information we had, and that didn't have a wide circulation among the Damascus populace.

"I've got to get down to Amman, Sandy," I said. "That's where things are cooking on the Arab side. That's where the decisions are being taken."

"I couldn't agree more," said Sandy. "I wish I could go with you."

In Damascus as well as Bagdad all kinds of rumors were floating about that the Arab states were going to jump the gun and start invading Palestine with their regular forces even before the British evacuation. I felt certain that if this were true, Abdullah would be at the root of it, and his decision would govern the others. It was already clear that Iraq was following Abdullah's lead. The conference in Amman was of crucial importance from this viewpoint.

That afternoon I went to call again on Achmet Bey Sharabati, the Syrian minister of war, and found him in a fever of excitement, which he was doing his best to conceal from me. He had a huge pistol under his coat and was extremely nervous. Remembering that he was a member of a government formed in opposition to the partisans of King Abdullah, those Syrians who still wanted to see Syria part of a great Hashemite Kingdom, I thought I understood one reason for his nervousness. Abdullah's star was rising. Another was the news from Palestine of what was happening to that idol of the people, Fawzi Bey el Kawukji, whose volunteer army Sharabati had done so much to support, and on whose success his reputation as a great war leader was largely staked.

"Things don't seem to be going too well, Achmet Bey," I suggested gently.

"They'll go better! These are only small matters," he assured me.

"But I hear that the volunteers aren't coming in so fast," I remarked. "Fawzi Bey is short of man power."

"We'll send him plenty of volunteers," Sharabati cried. "The people are filled with fighting spirit. They'll fight. And if they don't fight, I'll *make* them fight!"

"How can you make them fight if they don't want to?" I asked.

"I'll parade the wounded volunteers from Palestine through the streets of Damascus in Red Crescent ambulances!" Sharabati snapped back. "I'll show the people their bloody wounds! That'll make 'em fight!"

"That'll start a riot, Achmet Bey," I retorted. "You can't tell where it'll stop, either."

"I'm going to do it," Sharabati insisted. "I'll do it not only here but in every Arab city."

I questioned him as closely as seemed useful about the whereabouts and movements of units of the Syrian Army, but he closed up like a clam as soon as I mentioned the subject. He became more nervous, was obviously anxious to get rid of me and was beginning to be sorry he had sounded off about his proposed ambulance stunt.

As he might well have expected, I went straight to the legation and told Bob Memminger, the chargé d'affaires, what Sharabati had said. Bob took a suitable occasion to pass this item on to the President of the republic, Shukri el Kuwatli, who was shocked at the possibilities of rioting inherent in Sharabati's bright scheme and promptly had Sharabati on the presidential carpet and gave him hell. Sharabati was thereafter heard to say that he would get even with that fellow Eliot. It was too bad to have his ill will, of course, but this was a case where the life of every American in Damascus might have been sacrificed if the cry once went up, "Let's kill the Americans—they're arming the Jews to kill our brothers!" So I couldn't feel that I was violating professional ethics by passing on the word, especially as Sharabati had not

indicated that he was speaking confidentially or "off the record."

Next day Sandy and I had a long talk.

"Look here, Sandy," I said finally, "what's the matter with you and me driving down to Amman together? Maybe you could borrow one of the legation cars. You'd be furnishing me with transportation; for my part, I'm quite sure I can get you in to see the King, and Glubb Pasha, the commandant of the Arab Legion. We can maybe get a look at some of the troop units of the Legion, too. You can't do that officially because the United States doesn't recognize Transjordan. So both the *New York Post* and the United States would profit from this little arrangement, and besides that, we'd have fun."

"I'll say we would," agreed Sandy. "I'll put it up to the colonel. He's been trying to get some information about the Legion for a long time. And you're right about not being able to do it officially, because one of the fellows from the Beirut Legation went down there a few weeks ago and couldn't get to first base."

Filled with hope, we went into Colonel McGrath's office and told him our idea. He said he saw no reason why it wouldn't work out very well indeed, and furthermore said we could have the black Chevrolet. We planned to leave on the morning of the second day from then.

We were immediately busy with preparations. I decided to keep my room at the Orient Palace Hotel and leave most of my baggage there, taking only a brief case with a couple of spare shirts, shorts and socks and some toilet articles. We debated whether to take firearms, and, having decided to do so, instituted a grand search to find a revolver for me, I being a hopeless case with the standard army automatic pistol. Later we talked ourselves out of this idea, on the sound theory that

guns would probably get us into more trouble than they would be worth.

But the gun idea had arisen from another thought that had come into my head. From Amman to Jerusalem is only about three hours' drive. Why shouldn't we go to Jerusalem and see how things were going there?

"I'm not authorized to go to Jerusalem or into Palestine at all," said Sandy wistfully.

"You're not forbidden to, either," I pointed out. "And I know some of the Haganah officers there, so you can see something of their setup. Also I know the British general. We can get a lot of useful information. You bring back the bacon, and the colonel will be pleased with your enterprise and initiative."

"Yeah," said Sandy, "and what if I bring back a bullet? I'll be an international incident, that's what. But we might see some fighting, huh, George?"

"We might, indeed," I said. Which was where I qualified as a prophet in a big way.

The air attaché at Damascus, Colonel Brown, was flying that afternoon to the air strip at Qalundia, outside Jerusalem, on a routine ferry job in connection with the removal of consulate personnel and records from Jerusalem to Haifa. Since it was obvious that some of the consulate personnel would come out to meet him, I used this means to send a message to General MacMillan, to ask him to get a word to Glubb Pasha, introducing me. This precaution I felt necessary because Glubb Pasha was almost as completely allergic to American reporters as King Ibn Saud. Of course the ordinary means of communication between Damascus and Jerusalem were just about out of business.

We filled the back of the Chevrolet with five-gallon tins of gas, something which is hard to get in Transjordan and impossible in Palestine. We were all set.

Or so we thought.

"How about a Transjordan visa for you, Sandy?" I asked. "I've got mine—got it in Bagdad."

"Hell, I almost forgot," said Sandy. "We'll get O'Grady to fix it up right away."

But John O'Grady, in charge of the consular section of the legation, told us we were out of luck, as far as quick action was concerned.

"There's no Transjordan Legation here," he said. "You'll have to go to Beirut."

So instead of setting out for Amman the next day, we spent the day driving "over the hill" to Beirut and back. The reason for there being no Transjordan Legation in Damascus, I learned, was Syrian suspicion of the "Greater Syria" designs of King Abdullah. The present Syrian Government is that of the "National Bloc," a political group which was formed for the precise purpose of thwarting those designs. It has lately been torn by interparty rows between the Damascus section and the people from northern Syria, a split which nearly lost the National Bloc the last election. So the government is not feeling too comfortable, and a Transjordan Legation in Damascus would, it was feared, be a center for Hashemite agitation at a moment when this was highly undesirable; and at a moment when the power of Abdullah in Arab affairs was obviously on the upturn.

The Syrians didn't feel any better, on this account, by reason of the visit of Haj Amin el Hussein, the grand mufti of Jerusalem, to Amman at the time of the regent of Iraq's visit there. The mufti had always been more or less of a Syrian pet, a balance against Abdullah's pretensions to the acquisition of Palestine, or at least the Arab parts of that country. But now Abdel Kader el Hussein, the mufti's cousin and the military leader of the Arab bands around Jerusalem, had been killed at Castel, and the Arab Higher Committee for Pales-

tine (of which the mufti was chairman) was falling into sad disrepute with Palestinian Arabs because none of its members except old Hilmi Pasha dared to remain in Palestine any longer. They found it safer and more pleasant to be in Damascus or Cairo. In these circumstances, the mufti's journey to Amman could, in Arab eyes, only be interpreted as abject submission to Abdullah, a recognition of Abdullah as the eventual overlord of Arab Palestine.

Sandy and I talked of these matters as we drove, and they only increased our anxiety to get to Amman and Jerusalem and find out what was going on. The consular section of the Beirut Legation was at first rather doubtful about the possibility of getting a Transjordan visa that same day and, in the manner of most harassed administrative officers, inclined to view the matter in the light of sudden inconvenience to their routine procedure rather than an emergency in which the interests of the United States might in a small way be involved. However, Sandy managed to spur them into reluctant action, and after a good lunch at the Lucullus Restaurant and a brief visit with Pinkerton, we started back, arriving in Damascus in time for dinner. We went afterward to the Scheherazade, which in Damascus passes for a night club, taking with us Josephine Thompson, a code clerk in the embassy at Teheran, who was on temporary duty at Damascus. We had a gay evening and got to bed much too late to make us happy about an early start for Amman the next day. But we managed it.

We called first at the British Legation to pick up Norman Fox, of H.M. foreign service, who was a good friend of Sandy's and had expressed a desire to thumb a ride to Amman. We had also planned to give a ride to Major Beaumont Nesbitt, son of my old friend Major General "Paddy" Beaumont Nesbitt, who had been British military attaché in Washington during the early part of the war. Fox said we'd have some

trouble rousing the major, who was, he averred, suffering from a hangover of no trifling proportions. We drove around to his apartment and were informed by his Syrian servant that he had the mumps. This we disbelieved, with suitably scornful remarks, and Fox went in to "drag the old boy out," as he put it, Sandy meanwhile swearing that he wasn't going to wait all day for Beaumont Nesbitt to get his head out of the ice pack. Fox came back, looking rather startled.

"I say, you know," said he, "the old boy *has* got the mumps. He didn't have a hangover at all, what?"

"We'd better," said I hastily, "get ourselves the hell away from here before we get quarantined."

There being general and immediate agreement on this point, we got going without further delay.

The road from Damascus to Amman runs straight south across a stony plain, with the peaks of the Djebel Druse rising against the sky far to the east. Along it are strung a half dozen or so of gloomy Arab villages, built of dark-colored stone, with no visible thoroughfares between their interlocking walls, huddled around the tower of the mosque which is in the center of each of them.

"Can you imagine spending your lifetime in a dump like that?" Sandy muttered.

We passed the crossroads where the highway to the Djebel Druse country turned east; here the Foreign Legion had marched to battle with those fierce mountaineers in the days when the French were lords of Syria. We stopped at a roadside, ate our sandwiches and drank our beer. Then we went on to Deraa, Lawrence's "city behind a hill," the last town on the Syrian side of the border. There were several trains in the railway station or near it, but they did not appear to be troop trains. We passed the barrier without question and went on through rolling country to the Transjordan frontier town of Remthe.



We were immediately made acquainted with the fact that of all the countries of the Middle East the Hashemite Kingdom of Transjordan is the most complicated in its entrance and exit formalities. No less than twenty people were jammed into the little passport office, and each of them had to have his papers examined by one man, and then by another, while careful entries were made in a huge book. Everyone there except ourselves was Arab. They stared at us, some with unfriendly eyes, others indifferently. I heard one man mutter, "*Yehudi!*" which means "Jews." The crowd stirred and muttered. Somebody spat on the floor near my foot. I took my passport out of my pocket and held it so that those nearest me could see the American coat of arms on its green cover. There was another mutter of words, which I did not understand, but the tension relaxed. We got up to the desk of the passport officer and, after being put through the usual routine, we were free to proceed.

Sandy got out his camera, and we prepared to keep our eyes peeled. We knew that we would presently come to Mafrak, where there was an airfield and probably an Arab Legion post. We were in Transjordan, and we were after information. But five miles south of Remthe, at a road junction where the road branches right to the Palestine border, and left to Mafrak and Amman, we were flagged down by an Arab Legion captain, a big tough-looking man with a hard mouth, who very politely requested, in fair English, a lift to Amman. We could hardly refuse, but also we could hardly take pictures of military installations with him in the car. We could cheerfully have murdered him.

At Mafrak there was little to see: the headquarters of the 1st Division of the Arab Legion, a workshop for the repair of motor trucks and a camp which might have contained six hundred men, under canvas. Farther south we passed two

more camps. One was labeled "Headquarters 1st Mechanized Regiment, Arab Legion," and might have held a thousand men. There were sixteen armored cars in sight. The other, west of the road, was somewhat smaller. Six 6-pounder guns were parked in front of it, and an armored car lurched off the road and climbed a gentle slope as we went by. At Zerka there was something which looked like a permanent cantonment. We could form little estimate of what lay inside the perimeter. We asked questions of our Legion captain, who answered them in monosyllables, and evasive monosyllables at that. I kicked Sandy on the ankle, and we shut up. No use making the man suspicious.

Just as the sun was setting, we passed the railway station at Amman, swung round the edge of a steep hill, and saw the city below us in its deep gorge, on both sides of which its houses rose, tier on tier. Right below us was a park of motor trucks, perhaps a hundred in all. We went down the side of the hill and were in the narrow streets of Transjordan's capital. The captain got out with muttered thanks, and we swung into a street where a sign read PHILADELPHIA HOTEL. Amman was the ancient Philadelphia, of course, but the hotel was not oozing with brotherly love. It was packed with wealthy Arab refugees from Palestine, and not a room was to be had. Dan de Luce, of the A.P., and his pretty wife invited us to have a drink in the bar and told us that we could not hope to find a bed in Amman.

"We can try the legation," suggested Fox. He meant, of course, the British Legation, since there is no U.S. diplomatic representative in Transjordan. We crawled along the crowded street, went up another of the interminable grades past the Arab Legion Headquarters, made a hairpin turn and climbed some more till we came to a small white building on the very brink of a steep precipice. The hours of business

were long since over, but the door was opened by a young Englishman who greeted Fox cheerfully and was introduced to us as Derrick Leslie.

"Of course we'll find you some beds, chaps," said Derrick. "I've got a bit of room at my place, actually. Norman, you can take the floor and we'll rig beds for these fellows in the spare room. Right?"

So we went down into the canyon again, climbed a far steeper hill on the other side, did two hairpin turns and came at last to the apartment house where the Leslies lived. Mrs. Leslie, a slender blonde girl not long out from England, never turned a hair at this sudden invasion by three strangers of her not-too-large apartment. She just went to work to make us comfortable and happy, and we were soon sitting round her living room with drinks in our hands, talking to the Leslies and to two British warrant officers attached as instructors to the artillery of the Arab Legion at Zerka.

"We're having a blowout at our mess tonight," they said. "How about coming along and having a bit of fun?"

Nothing could have pleased Sandy and me more, so after dinner we all drove out in the Chevrolet to Zerka, the two sergeants major roaring ahead on their motorcycles. They had a very neat and comfortable messroom, with a bar adjacent, and plenty of liquid refreshments of all kinds. They talked to us freely about the Arab Legion, which they thought was quite dependent for efficiency on its British officers. Our two special friends were instructors in gunnery from the Royal Artillery, who had been sent to Transjordan to teach the Legion how to use the sixteen new 25-pounder guns which had been furnished King Abdullah under the terms of the British-Transjordan treaty.

"They're not too good with their drill," one of the sergeants major said. "And they haven't much spirit. Why, we thought we'd buck 'em up a bit by announcing that we'd

take 'em out on the range last Monday and let 'em actually fire the guns for the first time. And what do you think happened? Ninety of the blighters deserted during the night, including an officer candidate. They thought we were taking 'em to Palestine to fight the Jews."

"And will you fellows go along if the Legion does invade Palestine?" I inquired.

The British noncom laughed aloud. "And me with only three more years to do for pension?" he asked. "Not bloody likely. If I've got to get killed doin' my duty for king and country and all that, well, that's what I'm a soldier for. But I'm not goin' to get myself knocked off in somebody else's filthy war."

We all talked and drank until well after midnight and drove back to Amman and the Leslies' hospitable door feeling no pain whatever.

Next morning a little telephoning convinced us that we could not see either the King or Glubb Pasha that day. It was Saturday, and the British week end seemed to rule in Amman.

I looked at Sandy, and he grinned.

"Might as well try for Jerusalem," I said. "We've got time on our hands."

"Okay," said Sandy. "Let's go."

We had no trouble at all getting visas for Palestine from the British vice-consul, who didn't even ask us why we wanted to go there. As far as he knew, he said, the road was open and there was no trouble along the way between the frontier and Jerusalem.

We dumped one of our cans of gas into the Chevvie's tank, waved good-by to Derrick, who came to the legation veranda to see us off, and set out for the war-torn land of Palestine in a very cheerful frame of mind.

## Jerusalem Again

*May 1-3, 1948*

THE Transjordan passport officer at the Allenby Bridge made pencil notations in our passports, which he said would take care of our re-entry into Transjordan any time within the next few days. We "crossed over Jordan," and were not even stopped at the Palestine Police barrier at the western end of the bridge. We were in Palestine.

Anxious to escape from the heat and the oppressive atmosphere of hundreds of feet below sea level, Sandy stepped on the gas. We roared across the salt-crusted lowlands of the Dead Sea and began to climb into the hills of Judea. Jericho, a colorless hot little town which might have been Mexican or New Mexican, was quickly left behind.

"Where are those famous walls?" Sandy demanded.

The sun shone brightly in a clear sky. We climbed and climbed, looping around the hill shoulders. The spire of the church at Bethany loomed suddenly on a crest just ahead.

"We're getting there," I said. We rolled over the crest and through an Arab village, where we encountered our first road block. A mere glimpse of my Palestine Government press pass satisfied the sentry—a soldier of the local Arab militia. We began another gentle climb.

YOU ARE ENTERING JERUSALEM, said a sign in English at the roadside.

"I thought there was a war going on in this country," said Sandy in a tone of disappointment. "Why, the place couldn't be more peaceful."

We came to another hilltop, and there before us, basking in the sun, lay the Holy City. Approaching this time from the east, we saw the walls of the Old City directly before us, with the sun gilding the dome of the Mosque of Omar. To the left was the Vale of Hinnom, with the Hebron road winding away through it like a white ribbon across a brown scarf. Beyond were the hills on which stood Government House, still with the Union Jack bravely displayed, and Allenby Barracks—symbols of a British authority soon to vanish from the land.

"That's Jerusalem, Sandy," I said.

Sandy, a young man not easily impressed, checked the car and stared almost in awe, drinking in his first glimpse of Jerusalem.

"Jerusalem," he half whispered. "Well, I'll be damned."

As we swung north, skirting the walls past St. Stephen's Gate, some two hundred men were climbing the slope of Golden Gate Cemetery, scrambling past the gravestones. They carried rifles and were obviously Arab recruits at drill. Sandy, a strict soldier, didn't think they looked very martial. We cleared the northeastern corner of the city walls and turned west along the north face of the Old City past the Damascus Gate.

"It's all so peaceful," Sandy said, reverting to his former disappointment.

We came into a little open square, and there stood an armored car manned by two British constables of the Palestine Police, its machine gun trained to command the street leading out of the far side of the square.

"Oh, oh," said Sandy.

"Listen," I told him. He slowed, and from very far away we heard the unmistakable chatter of a machine gun, punctuated by the thud of mortar bombs.

"So peaceful?" I chuckled.

We passed through the square and came after a little while to one of the sandbag and barbed-wire barriers with which I had become familiar during my previous visit to Jerusalem. I got out, showed my press pass to the young Warwickshire corporal of the guard.

"My friend there is an American whom I'm taking to the P.I.O. to get him a press pass, too," I said. "Is it all right to go ahead?"

The corporal looked a little doubtful.

Fortunately at that moment Sandy stuck his head out the car window and called, "What's the trouble, George?"

At the sound of his voice the corporal's face cleared instantly. This was an American, all right. Nothing was being put over on him.

"O-kye, chum," he said. "But keep yer 'eads dahn. They're 'avin' 'ell's own scrap dahn in the Katamon quarter."

"What was that barrier?" Sandy asked as we rolled along King George Avenue.

"Entrance to the British security zone," I told him. "We'll have to get you a pass before you can get out of here again."

We parked the car across the street from the P.I.O., and as we walked toward the building I realized that something was wrong. A lot of nondescript local characters were carrying chairs, tables, odds and ends of all sorts out the door, and loading them into a couple of sad-looking motor trucks, or carrying them away by hand. I couldn't tell whether they were Jews or Arabs. One of the delicate little points of Jerusalem life at that time was the fact that often you could not be sure at a glance whether a particular swarthy individual in a blue shirt and khaki pants, or a khaki shirt and blue pants, was a son of David or a follower of him whom the chroniclers used to call Mahound. This sometimes led to embarrassing situations. At present it did not matter very much, since no

one offered to interfere with us. But it was clear that these people, whoever they were, were looting the P.I.O., looting British Government offices in broad daylight with a British guard looking on not fifty feet away. Nothing could have made clearer the utter breakdown of constituted authority in Jerusalem as the British grip on the city slowly relaxed and Jew and Arab fought to see who should be the new master of Zion.

Sandy and I climbed four flights of stairs—the elevator had long since folded up—and found Dickie Stubbs alone in his office. There were some twenty typewriters on the floor at one end of the room.

“Hello,” said Dickie. “You back, Eliot, to view the remains? I’m trying to save the typewriters anyway. They’re pulling telephones off the wall downstairs.”

I introduced Sandy as “Mr. Sanderson” and Dickie quite readily gave him a press pass. I think he guessed that Sandy might be an American officer, military or diplomatic, but as long as he wasn’t told in so many words, he didn’t have to take official notice of it and could treat Sandy as a presumably journalistic friend introduced by a fully accredited correspondent.

“I’ll be glad to be out of here,” Dickie told us. “The show’s over as far as we’re concerned. Just a question of withdrawing when the time comes, with as much dignity as we can manage. Come on down to the bar. There are still a few bottles left.”

We went back down the four flights of stairs and found several correspondents in the bar engaged in saving the remaining liquor from the looters by pouring it down their throats. Farny Fowle was there, and I was glad to see him safe and well.

“You’re just in time, George,” he told me. “The Haganah



staff is putting on a conducted tour of the Katamon fighting front for twenty-five or thirty of us at two o'clock. You guys want to come along?"

We certainly did, and we said so. It was only one-fifteen, so we still had time for lunch.

"How's the old Salvia Hotel, Farny?" I asked. "Can we still get beds there and a meal?"

"I guess so," he said doubtfully. "It's still running, anyway. But it's in a special Haganah security zone now. You remember the Military Courts Building that was right across the street? Well, the Palmach\* battalion that is spearheading this Katamon show is using it for a headquarters."

"We'd better go see, Sandy," I suggested. Dickie had to be off to a meeting, so we left him and headed for the hotel in the car, Sandy proudly showing his new pass to the sentry at the British barrier. We went up the hill which I so well recalled, but about a hundred yards from the hotel we found a stout-looking sandbag road block, guarded by some half-dozen Haganah soldiers.

They pointed at our Syrian license plates, all in nice Arabic characters, and they said things to us in Hebrew. We didn't seem to be popular. They were obviously not going to let us through. A fat man in civilian clothes, who spoke English, came up and told us that we could not pass. Not with that car.

"Anyway," I asked, "won't you send up there to headquarters for the officer of the guard?"

He said he'd do that, and a soldier trotted off with the message. A couple of minutes later I saw a Haganah officer coming down the hill. Fortunately I knew him, or rather, he knew me by sight, having seen me in the company of Major Herzog and others during my earlier visit to Jerusalem.

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\* The Palmach is a specially trained, commando-type unit of the Haganah.

"It's all right," he said when I'd explained that we just wanted to get to the hotel. "Go ahead."

The sentries were still scowling at those Syrian license plates.

"Look, captain," I said, "how's about parking this car in your compound over there? I don't think it's safe to leave it on the street in a Jewish quarter, even though it's not our fault we had to borrow it in Damascus."

"Sure, why not?" he agreed. So we parked our car inside the courtyard of the Haganah headquarters, and there it made its home for the next couple of days—I'm sure the only car with Syrian plates which was watched over by a Haganah guard in all Palestine.

Madame Katz, the landlady of the *Salvia*, greeted us effusively. We were, she said, just in time for lunch. I could have my old room, and she had a nice room for Sandy, too. No hot water, of course. But I wouldn't expect that, would I?

I wouldn't. And the lunch was not too bad. We ate hastily. By the time we had finished the gang was gathering for the trip to the Katamon front. All through lunch we had been hearing bursts of firing, the single shots of snipers and an occasional mortar bomb.

Colonel Lourie, a former columnist for the *Palestine Post*, was now area public-relations officer for the Haganah, and was in charge of the conducted tour, under the supervision of one of the Palmach officers who was responsible for our personal safety.

"Please follow instructions carefully, ladies and gentlemen," he said. "The main fighting is over, but mopping-up operations are still in progress and there is considerable danger if you are not watchful."

We went down a short slope along an unfinished street, passed a new apartment building and entered a communications trench, which was dug just deep enough to give you

shelter if you crouched quite low as you went along. One or two of the boys straightened up to peer over the sandbag parapet at the left, but ducked back again when a sniper's bullet flicked overhead. The trench ended at the edge of another street. On the far side of the street were several houses, with stone walls revetting their little patches of lawn and flowers, and driveways between them leading to garages in the rear. A soldier came dashing across the street and spoke briefly to the Palmach officer, who was leading the way.

He turned round and checked us with uplifted hand.

"I'm afraid we have an unfortunate change in the situation," he said. "An Arab party has just filtered into a building which commands this area, and they've placed a Bren gun to enfilade this street, which we must cross to get where we're going. I'm not sure the battalion commander would approve of my letting you proceed."

Several voices well to the rear called out, "What's the delay?" . . . "Come on, let's go."

These urgent souls could not possibly have heard what the officer was saying, but he mistook their impatience for ardor.

"Very well," he said. "We can try. The best way will be to run across in small groups, three or four at a time."

One such group immediately darted over, quite safely. *Br-tt-tt*. The Bren gunner had seen them and fired a burst, too late. Sandy and I and a couple of other lads took our foolish feet in hand and dashed for the cover of one of the driveways. We made it. *Br-tt-tt-tt*.

"Look at that damned fool," said Sandy.

A short fat man, obviously a correspondent but one I didn't know, was walking calmly across the street, taking his time, smiling easily.

"Run, you idiot!" I barked at him.

"Nonsense," he replied. "You fellows get too excited about this make-believe war. Arab snipers. Bren guns. Hah!"

He had reached the sidewalk, about five feet from where we were standing in the shelter of the wall which abutted on the driveway. He stood still and mopped his face with a large handkerchief. He was in full view from the Arab position.

"Get under cover!" roared the Palmach officer from across the street.

The fat man chuckled.

"I've been here only two days," he said to us in easy conversational tones, "but that's long enough for me to learn that this is the phony war to end all phony wars."

*Br-tt-tt-tt.* Bullets smacked into the cornerstones of the wall a few inches from where our fat friend was standing. Stone splinters stung his hand, which he jerked up before his face. Slowly he moved it, saw the blood running from a half-dozen little nicks.

He emitted a squawk like an outraged hen and flung himself forward full-length into the driveway, burrowing into the gravel as though trying to dig himself a foxhole right then and there with his bare hands.

"You shouldn't get so excited about this phony war, brother," said Sandy, too disgusted even to laugh.

Most of the others came on across in small groups, and we went along the driveway, ducked through a passage between two garages, moved crouching behind another sandbag parapet and brought up at the rear of a pair of white-walled apartment houses. One was occupied by a detachment of the Highland Light Infantry, and they had two 6-pounder guns on the roof, pointing in different directions. At one time the British had threatened to use these guns to fire on either Arabs or Jews who broke the peace. But the peace was being torn up by the roots now, and the British obviously felt that the situation was beyond their control. Two Scots soldiers heating soup in an iron dixie were the only sign of British activity.

The other apartment house was being used as advance

headquarters for the Haganah forces. We were taken up a flight of stairs and into a kitchen, where we all gathered round a table on which a map was spread. A young Palmach officer sat at the table and explained, in Hebrew, the Katamon operation which was then in its last stages of completion. He was, Lourie explained, the company commander who had led the initial offensive.

He certainly knew his business as well as any company commander I've ever encountered. In clipped, soldierlike sentences, with Lourie translating, he explained the objective of the operation: to clear Arab snipers and combat groups from the Katamon quarter and occupy the high ground dominating the area. He then went on to detail the plan of his battalion commander, his own part in the plan and just how the plan had worked out.

He made no boasts, nor did he make excuses for the few setbacks which had been encountered. By such an hour he had taken St. Simeon Monastery, the highest point in Katamon. At such an hour the Arabs counterattacked. His supplies could not move up, because a house had caught fire and blocked the route. He had lost so-and-so many men to Arab mortar fire because they had not taken cover properly. Reinforcements had reached him at such a time. He had resumed the offensive and cleared the area of the enemy. Mopping up was now proceeding, with the enemy trying to infiltrate from the Arab villages to the west. He thought this attempt would not succeed. His men had behaved well, and, save for the group caught by the Arab mortars, his casualties had not been excessive. Leadership of small units and co-ordination by subordinate leaders of riflemen and supporting weapons had been satisfactory. That was about all. Were there any questions?

"I've heard worse briefings at Benning,"\* I said to Sandy.

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\* The Infantry School of the United States Army is located at Fort Benning, Georgia.

Sandy nodded agreement. Lourie caught what I said, understood the allusion and translated my words to the young captain, who looked up with a shy, pleased smile. "I t'ank you, sir," he said, the first and only English words I heard him utter.

He answered a lot of questions, not many of which shed additional light on the operation. Then an officer whom Lourie said was the battalion commander asked whether any of us would like to go up to the St. Simeon Monastery, scene of the most severe fighting, in an armored bus.

Several of us said we'd like to very much. We went outside and clambered into the big armored bus. There were three Palmach soldiers inside, armed with new Mauser rifles with very light-colored stocks. The tommy gunner who sat beside the driver was a girl. Only the Palmach, the commando unit of the Haganah, still uses girls for combat duties.

The bus backed and turned. One of the soldiers closed the armored doors at the end. The bus stopped, and a voice called an order. The soldier opened the door again.

Another officer stood there. I learned later that he was the area commander, with a rank equivalent to brigadier.

"Sorry," he said curtly, "but the streets leading to St. Simeon are still within reach of Arab mortar fire. I'll risk my armor for military purposes, but not to take civilians into danger zones."

We got out. After hearing about the mortars I was just as glad.

We made our way back to the hotel by the route we had come. There was no Bren gunfire along that open street. I gathered that the Bren gunner had been dealt with.

A small plane swooped overhead. "That's the afternoon liaison plane from Tel Aviv," Lourie told us. "We run them twice a day regularly."

Bullets zipped merrily above us: Arab snipers were firing at the plane without effect.

We came again to the Salvia, quiet and white beside the dun-colored Haganah headquarters. My hand was on the doorknob when the loud roar of an explosion over behind the headquarters building shook the ground on which I stood.

"That's a three-inch mortar shell, at least," said Sandy.

"They must be trying to hit the headquarters," I guessed. "Let's go up on the roof and see if we can spot where the shells are falling."

We ran up the stairs and reached a little hallway where a door opened to the roof. We went out into the sunshine. A Haganah soldier on observation duty crouched behind sandbags in the roof corner, peering out through a loophole. He glanced round at us in some surprise: a pair of six-foot Americans in civilian clothes was not what he expected to see. Again I heard the whisper of bullets, rather close. Evidently Arab snipers could see us moving about. We could not see where the mortar shells were falling.

"Those bullets are too close to be healthy, George," said Sandy. I agreed. We went back inside. But I was still curious about the shells. I stepped just over the threshold, peered around the edge of the open door. *Zip-zip*. They could still see me.

"Give it up, George," begged Sandy.

I took a step backward, was under cover again.

*Zop!* A bullet slammed through the thin wooden door panel at a spot exactly where my stomach had been five seconds before.

"Let's go down to the bar and have a drink," I said, trying to be very, very nonchalant.

We went down to the bar and had a couple of pink gins.

A Haganah security officer whom I knew wandered in.

"I'm going up to the Rehavia quarter," he said, "to have a look at some places where Fawzi's artillery was at work yesterday afternoon. Would you gentlemen like to come along?"

We'd heard reports about this artillery of Fawzi Bey's. He was reported wandering around in the hills outside Jerusalem with a couple of 75-mm. guns, which he occasionally loosed off into the Jewish residential quarters, apparently in the faint hope of perhaps killing an odd Jew or so. It seemed a senseless waste of ammunition for very uncertain results, quite aside from the savage disregard of the laws of war.

We got into a car which the Haganah officer had outside. His driver was a large-sized girl, very jolly and friendly.

We went to the part of the city where the shelling was said to have taken place.

"There's a shell crater right over there," the officer said, pointing to a vacant lot across the street. He pulled up the car in front of a bicycle-repair shop, and we all got out. The sun was shining brightly. People were out, walking, talking, loitering. Children played on the sidewalk with wooden guns; one was screaming with rage because his little friends wanted him to play Arab for them to bang-bang at. An old woman was crossing the street at the next corner, carrying a paper bag full of something or other.

We went over to the vacant lot and looked at the ragged hole in the ground. It was a shell crater, all right. Sandy walked around it, sizing it up with a professional eye.

"Yup," said he, "just about the size for a seventy-five. Hmm."

A shell burst at the street corner in a white-hot blast of flame. Debris clattered against the sides of the buildings. Steel fragments whistled past our ears. We dashed for cover. The bicycle-repair shop looked like a good sturdy building. Sandy and the girl driver hit the door at the same instant. The girl being built closer to the ground and more compactly than my long rangy friend, went through first, and Sandy rolled in on top of her, his long arms and legs flailing and knocking bicycles down from their racks.



I had to run around the car to reach the door. The Haganah officer was right on my heels.

"This way," he said. "There's a really safe shelter here in the next building."

We crossed an alley, went through a low door and were guided to a basement room where we sat on the floor with about a dozen others while the shells crashed down outside. Some of them came quite close to our building. The Haganah officer assured us that it was strong enough to take a hard knock.

"We've got these shelters arranged all over this part of town," he said, "and everyone knows where to take cover when shelling begins."

Two children were crying with fright. An elderly woman sat by them, trying to comfort them and muttering long strings of obvious maledictions every time a shell hit.

"What's she saying?" Sandy asked.

"She's cursing the British," the girl driver answered.

Fawzi's guns were of French manufacture and had been furnished him by the Syrian Government, but it was a time-honored custom in Palestine, with both Jew and Arab, to blame the British for all the ills of the land.

A shell hit very close. Some loose plaster fell from the ceiling and went down the back of my neck. I did a little cursing on my own hook.

There was a long silence.

"That may be the end of it," said the Haganah officer. "Let's go get the car and try to get out of here—if the car's still there." It was still there. The old lady with the paper bag was lying near it. She was quite dead; Fawzi's only victim for twelve shells expended.

Several people were gathered round her body. There was nothing we could do. We went back to the *Salvia* and had a quick one. We all needed it.

There was no firing in the Katamon quarter now, except for an occasional rifleshoot. A Jewish newspaperman came in and said that a truce had been arranged. "Thank God," said Madame Katz, and offered to buy us all a drink in celebration. We were just lifting our glasses to her when there were four loud explosions over Katamon way, followed by repeated bursts of automatic fire. This went on intermittently all night.

Sandy and I had lunch next day with Major Herzog and Walter Aitun, a political officer of the Jewish Agency. They told us that the Arabs remaining in Katamon were only small parties, which were showing signs of trying to get away. The Arab infiltration from the villages had stopped. Katamon was wholly under Haganah control.

This meant that all Jerusalem was in Jewish hands except the Old City and the Sheikh Jarrah quarter, which was not now inhabited but was held by the remnants of the late Abdel Kader's fighting gangs. Of course the British security zones were still occupied, but I gathered that Haganah arrangements had been perfected to take them over as soon as the British pulled out. The food situation, which had been desperate early in April, had been much improved by several convoys which the Haganah had rammed through from the coast, with tacit British agreement or at least noninterference. The road to Tel Aviv was blocked again, however, at Bab el Wad, where the Arabs had blown up the defile and created a road block a mile long.

Prospects for a truce in Jerusalem looked a little brighter. The Jerusalem Arabs, especially the men of substance, were beginning to see more advantages in an arrangement which would keep the Holy City from becoming a fighting zone.

"What about the twenty thousand Arabs in the Old City?" I asked.

"If they'll permit our Jewish colony there to be fed, we

won't trouble them," I was told. But somehow this did not ring quite true. It might represent the views of the Agency, and also of the Haganah, but there was the Irgun Zvai Leumi to be reckoned with, and they certainly had several hundred fighting men in Jerusalem, some of them in the Old City itself. They had sworn to make Jerusalem the capital of the state of Israel. The Stern gang was believed to have similar ideas. Suppose they attacked the Arabs in the Old City when the British left? Or suppose the Arabs attacked them? What would happen to the shrines of three great religions, crowded inside those battlemented walls?

It seemed to me that little enough was being done to provide for the safety of Jerusalem, and that, if that safety was indeed a charge on the Christian as well as the Jewish and the Moslem conscience, some very practical measures ought to be apparent by this time. But at Lake Success and in the capitals of the world, men still talked, thought wishfully, and did nothing.

We should have started back Sunday afternoon, but decided to stay over one more day. I wanted to see General MacMillan, who was away and would not return till Monday. Sandy, too, wanted to see more of the Jewish officers in Jerusalem.

The press center in the David Building was now out of business. The remaining correspondents had gathered in the Pantiles Hotel, which had no staff but which the boys were running themselves, pooling their resources to buy food and doing their own bedmaking and cleaning up. Carter Davidson, of the A.P., was chairman of the house committee.

Monday morning we went to see Bob Allen, the army P.R.O. The army headquarters in the former King David Hotel was a shambles. Not a desk remained, and scarcely a chair or a filing cabinet. Everything had been moved out to Haifa. We had to show our passes to three different guards

before finally getting up to Bob's office. He was working on a couple of planks laid across trestles. He said that General MacMillan was back and wanted me to come to tea at five o'clock. Sandy's face grew a little longer. We wanted to be back over the Transjordan frontier before sundown. The Amman road was no joke at night, and besides there were rumors that the frontier was to be closed after dark.

Sandy wanted to get a good large-scale map of Palestine. A nice young captain named Street said that all the maps had gone off to Haifa, or he'd give us one.

A corporal of the Argylls, belonging to the general's bodyguard, said: "There's still that big map on the wall in the operations room, sir."

"Oh, yes, of course," said Street. "Go tear it off the wall, Corporal, and give it to this gentleman."

The corporal came back presently, fairly staggering under a load of map sheets. It was a large-scale map, all right. Sandy was delighted. Here was tangible evidence of his exertions, to show his colonel.

We went back to the *Salvia* for lunch. A rather pretty Jewish girl named Rose Kantor was lunching there with a lawyer of my acquaintance. She was looking very shaken and nervous. It turned out that her husband had been shot in the leg as they were walking along the street on Saturday afternoon; she didn't know by whom. He was now in the hospital. Her husband had been employed by the Palestine Government as its chief veterinary officer. I'd heard that the Kantors had been accused by the Sternists of being too friendly with the British. But Mrs. Kantor wasn't saying anything like that. She only said, over and over, "If only I could go with my husband to Haifa! We must leave this place."

After lunch Sandy and I offered to drive her home. She said no, thanks, very hastily. She'd walk. It wasn't far. But was there anything we could do? No, unless we could help

her get to Haifa. We could as easily have helped her go to the moon. She left the hotel alone. I can still see her walking away down the dusty street, a slender, smartly dressed little figure, walking slowly with her shoulders bent a little as though under a weight of fear.

Early in July, after I had returned to New York, I read in a Palestine dispatch that Rose Kantor had been seized by the Stern gang in Jerusalem and executed as a spy.

That Monday morning in Jerusalem, the *Palestine Post* had carried a banner headline announcing that Syrian regular troops had invaded Palestine. The city was seething with rumors. I did not believe the report. Neither did Sandy. Only three days before, we had both seen all the armor of the Syrian Army still sitting idly in the camp north of Damascus, with no sign of activity, overhauling, gassing up or anything indicating approaching movement. Moreover we did not believe that the Syrians would move alone, and certainly the Transjordan Army was not yet on the march. But the Jewish Agency seemed convinced that the report was true.

Right on top of the invasion story came a definite report that the British were sending heavy reinforcements into Palestine. This one seemed to be well founded. An A.P. man sent in an eyewitness account of heavy tanks marching up from Egypt by road; Cyprus and Malta reported the departure of British troop units by sea and air. The Jews of course immediately began saying that this proved that the British meant to stay in Palestine after all. The Arabs began saying that the British were bringing in troops to protect the Jews from the sword of Islam.

I began to look forward to my interview with the British commanding general with the most intense interest.

General MacMillan told me as soon as I'd greeted him that he had received my message and had sent word to Glubb Pasha, asking the latter to "have a word" with me. His ar-

rangements for the evacuation of Palestine, he said, were complete. The reinforcements were for two purposes: first, to make sure that the evacuation would not be interfered with by anyone, after May 15; and second, to make sure that no "damn fool Arabs" would jump the gun and start invading Palestine before May 15.

I asked him about the Syrian invasion story.

"Nothing to it at all," he said promptly. "I've just had a complete air reconnaissance of the whole area made. There's no invasion, and there won't be, not while I'm responsible for the security of Palestine."

"You would act to repel any invasion before May fifteenth?" I asked.

"If any Arab army sticks its silly nose across the Palestine frontier while Palestine is still a British mandate," MacMillan said grimly, "I'll attack 'em with everything I've got—land and air."

"Can I print that, General?" I asked.

"Eh? Yes, why not?" the general replied. "Good for 'em to know it. Can't have British territory invaded, you know."

He told me that Haifa was quiet and that his arrangements with the Jewish garrison were working out very well.

"The streets are all open," he said, "and I must say that I've rarely seen a town better policed. The Jews keep good discipline."

I asked about the reports that were then current that Fawzi el Kawukji was planning to recapture Haifa.

"Don't believe it," said MacMillan. "Fawzi had quite enough of that when he moved toward Haifa two weeks ago, and the Jews almost wiped him out at Mishmar Haemek. What a mess Fawzi made of it! These Arabs are just no good as soldiers. No discipline, no leadership, no idea of co-ordination. The Jews will tear them to pieces when we go. Meanwhile, if any Arabs attack Haifa while I still need it as an

evacuation port, they'll have both me and the Jews to deal with."

"What about the Arab Legion, General?" I inquired.

"Ah, they have discipline, I grant you," MacMillan said. "But it's the discipline of British officers. I have some of the Legion in Palestine now. They'll all be over the Transjordan frontier by May twelfth. If they want to come back after the fifteenth, that's Abdullah's business."

I asked whether he expected to have his evacuation completed before August 1, the date set for the last British troops to be out of Palestine.

"Long before," he told me. "Meanwhile, I'll have enough force here to take care of myself. I'm bringing in a regiment of heavy tanks and two Marine Commando groups, besides other units. I've got three squadrons of rocket-firing Spitfires, and enough reconnaissance planes to maintain continual air reconnaissance over the whole of Palestine. Once the fifteenth is past, my sole task will be to get my people out of this country without further losses. Anyone who tries to interfere is going to get hurt."

I asked him about another report: the Jews had been accusing him of coming to the rescue of the Arabs in Tiberias, while the Arabs had been screaming to high heaven that he had handed Tiberias over to the Jews.

"Both stories have some truth in 'em." The general grinned. "We had to leave Tiberias according to plan. There were some Arab volunteers and local police in the place, maybe two hundred of 'em, with the usual delusions of grandeur. They wanted to stay there and try to hold Tiberias. Fawzi had sent word he would come and help them. But the Jews were all round the place in greatly superior numbers, and Fawzi was as usual talking far better than he could perform. So our chaps just took these Arabs, loaded 'em into trucks and rolled 'em off to Haifa whether they liked it or

not. Saved their lives. We marched out, and the Jews marched in. Inevitable. Couldn't have been any other way."

It was time for me to go. I shook hands with the staff officers who had shared our tea and cakes, and the general came to the door with me to see me off. I wished him good luck with all my heart. He had been a good friend to me, and he is a capable and honest soldier. I have a feeling that if the British Government had listened more attentively to the advice of Gordon MacMillan they might have had a more accurate understanding of the military situation in Palestine instead of believing to the very last, as apparently they did, that the Arabs would sweep the Jews into the sea.

I dashed back to the Pantiles, panting to get the word on the wire that the British general had said he'd attack any Arab invading army. Sandy was all set to start. He began pawing the air when I said there'd be a slight delay. I sat down at a battered old typewriter to bang out my yarn.

"George, for God's sake," moaned Sandy. "We gotta get to Amman! I don't want to make those quick turns in the dark."

"Okay, okay, just a minute. You'll get to Amman," I muttered, banging away.

Carter Davidson came in with a bottle of gin. "How's about it, gang?" he inquired. We said, hell, yes.

"We'll never get to Amman tonight if you don't step on it, George," Sandy insisted, gulping down an inch of gin in a water glass.

Ed Fitzsimmons, the A.P. photographer, came in and said that the Jews had blown up the bridge at Kilometer Ten on the Jericho road, the road we had to take. He said the British engineers were out repairing the damage.

"Sandy," I said, more to give him something to do than for any idea that it would help, "you go call up Herzog and ask him for God's sake to pass the word along to his boys not to



blow any more bridges on that road till we've had time to get to the frontier."

Sandy went to the telephone. "We'll never make Amman now," he said as he dialed.

Bob Hecox, a Paramount News photographer, got up suddenly from a big easy chair where he'd been sitting. "You guys going to Amman?" he demanded.

"We sure are," I said, ripping the last sheet out of the typewriter and handing it to Davidson. "Right now. Carter, will you get that stuff on the wire for me? I haven't time to fool with it myself."

"Sure," said the ever-helpful Davidson.

Sandy put down the phone and said Herzog thought we'd get through all right.

"May I go to Amman with you?" Hecox asked.

"If you're ready to go now," I said.

"Okay. Wait till I get my cameras." Hecox dashed off. We went outside and got into the car. Hecox came out with his stuff and got into the back seat. Davidson and Fitz came out on the balcony, lifted their glasses to us in a parting salute. We said good-by to Jerusalem.

All the way to Kilometer Ten Sandy and I worried about that damned bridge. Suppose we couldn't get by? Finally we came round a shoulder of the hill and saw the bridge.

A strong working party of Royal Engineers was just climbing into a truck as we drove up.

"Good luck, chaps!" called one of them, I thought rather ominously.

The center span of the bridge was down, neatly and completely demolished. The engineers hadn't repaired the bridge; they had built a by-pass, down into the dry wadi which it spanned and up again to the road on the other side. We rolled down to the bed of the wadi and came opposite the bridge.

Sandy stopped the car. "I've got to have a picture of that bridge," he said. "Bob, take my Leica and snap it for me, will you? I'm on the wrong side of the car."

"Sure," said Hecox.

The sun was quite low. On the crest of a ridge about five hundred yards away I saw a solitary figure walking along, outlined against the sky. He had something in his hand. It might have been a stick—or a rifle.

I began to feel uneasy as Hecox fumbled with the camera. If the Haganah had blown this bridge, any watcher they left would be for information purposes only. But if the Irgun had blown it, as was quite possible, they might well have left a man or two in the hope of getting a shot at a British soldier, or some other (from their point of view) undesirable character.

"Hurry it up, Bob," I urged. "I don't like the looks of that guy up on the hill."

At that moment the man on the hill lay down.

My stomach curled up around the edges. I was just as sure as I could be that he had lain down for a nice comfortable shot at us, and at five hundred yards we were sitting ducks. Also I was on the side next the rifleman.

"Scram out of here, Sandy," I snapped. "Get going!"

At that instant the shutter clicked, and Sandy started the car. The man on the crest arose and walked slowly away. We will never know whether he had just been ready to shoot and then decided not to waste a bullet on a moving target when the car started, or whether he had just stopped for a brief rest.

At the Allenby Bridge the barrier was down on the Palestine side. "Frontier closed," said the sentry. We showed passes and made noises. The sentry waved his arms. A company sergeant major at last came over from the little camp near the bridge, looked at our passes and ordered the barrier raised.

We crossed the bridge and stopped again at the Transjordan frontier post.

A sudden thought came to me. I turned round and said to Hecox, "You've got a Transjordan visa, all right, haven't you, Bob?"

"Huh?" said Hecox. "What's that? Transjordan visa? Hell, no. I haven't got any Transjordan visa."

"Oh, Christ," said Sandy. "You better just sit here then. Maybe nobody will notice."

Bob settled back and apparently went to sleep.

Sandy and I got out of the car, under the—we hoped—incurious gaze of some half-dozen Arab Legion soldiers, and walked into the passport office. The same passport officer was on duty who had been there when we went through en route to Jerusalem. He was a neat little man in a brown suit, a red-and-white kaffiyeh and a small black mustache. I handed him my passport, pointing to the penciled notation he had made with his own hand.

"We're back again," I said with a cheery smile. "Going to Amman."

He looked at the notation as though he had never seen it before, then began leafing through the whole passport.

Sandy muttered something under his breath. I turned around.

Sandy was just picking up a piece of paper from the floor, which had apparently fallen out of his pocket as he extracted his passport. I turned cold, for that piece of paper was a Haganah zone pass. It looked as big as the front page of a New York newspaper, and the Hebrew characters seemed to stand out in letters of fire. Sandy shoved it back into his pocket. I could feel the eyes of that Arab passport officer boring into my back. Slowly I turned round again.

The passport officer was still thumbing through my passport. His eyes were on its pages. I began to breathe again.

The passport officer looked up. "You have to wait. I must telephone to Amman," he said.

"But you marked our passports yourself," I expostulated. "You said we could come back without any trouble. See. There's your own notation."

"Yes. That," said the passport officer. "But new orders come today. Now must telephone minister of interior personally, for any foreigner come into Transjordan. You wait. Only half an hour, maybe."

Half an hour. With Hecox sitting in the car, visaless, and at any minute of that half hour it might occur to some bright mind that there were three Americans but only two passports. Fortunately it was getting dark, and the passport officer himself never even looked at the car. He went out on the veranda, entered another room and began twisting the crank on an old-fashioned telephone attached to the wall. At intervals he spoke into it, and I suppose somebody somewhere made reply.

He stopped after a while, came out, said "Maybe later. You wait," and went back into his office.

Sandy said, "Maybe Bob should get out and explain how he hasn't got a visa."

"No," I said. "We've got to see it through this way now."

Time dragged on. The Arab Legionnaires walked around the car, peered at Hecox sitting inside, chattered among themselves. Sandy and I stood on the veranda and tried to maintain a pose of calm indifference. We didn't go near the car. We sort of pretended we didn't know it was there.

The telephone rang. A soldier answered it, summoned the passport officer.

"Okay," he said when he had hung up. "You go to Amman now."

He stamped our passports, and we went out and got into the car. It was reluctant to start. I was sitting on pins and

needles. Sandy swore and jabbed frantically at the starter button.

The motor roared. Sandy slammed the car in gear, and an Arab Legion sergeant jumped off the veranda, ran over and hammered on the door of the car with his fist.

"Here we go," I said. "I hope it isn't true what they say about balls and chains in these Transjordan jails."

"What do you want?" Sandy asked the sergeant.

The sergeant jerked his thumb in a gesture recognized by the drivers of motorcars the world over.

He just wanted to thumb a ride to Amman.

"Get in," Sandy bade him, and we rolled off into the darkness.

Two hundred yards from the frontier post the lights went out.

It was pitch-dark. We could never make that road, with all its twists and turns as it climbed up from the Dead Sea level to the Transjordan plateau, without lights.

"Maybe it's a fuse," Hecox suggested. "Got a spare?"

"No," said Sandy after rummaging in the glove compartment.

"Anybody got any tin foil?" Hecox asked.

I had some on a bar of chocolate.

"I think this will do," said Hecox. He got the fuse out. It seemed to be blown. He wrapped it carefully with tin foil. Sandy held matches so he could see; we didn't even have a flashlight.

Hecox put the fuse back. Sandy turned the switch. The lights went on.

I can't tell you how relieved we were.

Two hours later we came to the crest of the gorge in which Amman is hidden. The lights of the city lay below us and sprawled in crazy patterns over the opposite face of the canyon.

Hecox, who hadn't said a word since he'd fixed the fuse, suddenly spoke up: "What's this place?" he demanded.

"Amman, Bob," said I. "We're here at last."

"Amman!" said Bob. "What the hell am I doing in Amman?"

"You wanted to come," I told him. "Don't you remember, back there in the Pantiles? You took a sudden notion to go with us."

"My God!" said Bob. "I wasn't really awake. Been up north—haven't slept for three days and nights. I can't even remember leaving Jerusalem."

"Well, you sure pulled a blank," said Sandy. "And while you were doing it you took a picture, fixed a fuse——"

"And entered the Hashemite Kingdom of Transjordan without a visa," I wound up. "Well, now we're here we might as well go on over to that peerless hostelry, the Philadelphia Hotel, and see if we can get anything that resembles a dinner."

The resemblance was strictly accidental.

## Amman

*May 3-5, 1948*

FROM the terrace of the Leslie's apartment, I could look almost straight down upon the city of Amman. On the opposite hilltop a camel stalked lazily beside a grass-grown Roman ruin. To the right the smoke of a busy switch engine crawled skyward, half hiding the ancient amphitheater where once the gladiators had made sport for a provincial audience. A corner of the unpretentious Royal Palace of King Abdullah was just visible. A bright red oil truck sped along the street below me. The local Taplines office, its windows still unmended after being smashed by a mob in the anti-American demonstration at the time of the partition vote on Palestine, seemed silent and untenanted now. Mrs. Leslie came out with a cup of coffee and said that someone was calling me on the telephone.

It was Arab Legion Headquarters, to say that Brigadier Glubb Pasha would be glad to have me call on him the following morning at eleven o'clock. Encouraged by this promising start, I asked the British Legation operator, through whose switchboard the Leslie's phone was connected, to call Samir Pasha el Rifai, to whom I'd been given a letter of introduction by Bill Lenahan in Beirut. Samir Pasha answered the phone himself—in first-rate English—and said for me to come right on over if I'd like to. I asked if I could bring Major Sanderson, and Samir said, "Of course."

Inquiry showed that Samir Pasha's house was practically across the street from the Leslie's. Mrs. Leslie would not let Sandy or me leave until we'd had another cup of coffee and

finished our bacon and eggs. Then we went for our first call in Amman.

For an ex-prime minister, Samir Pasha was delightfully informal. He was on the terrace waiting for us, dressed in clothes much like our own, and he led us into a small study which could well have been duplicated in any American house of moderate size.

He asked us several questions about our experiences in Palestine, and then said that he understood we wished to be received by His Majesty. We said, yes indeed, we were hoping to be so honored. "Fine," said Samir, "it will be arranged." He clapped his hands, and a young man came into the room. Samir spoke to him briefly in Arabic, turned back to us, apologized for not speaking English, and said he'd put in a call for the foreign minister, who would fix up our royal interview.

I began to draw him out on the subject of Palestine. He was quite willing to discuss it. He gave us the usual Arab clichés, but with a little smile as though he imagined we'd heard all that before. Then he said very earnestly:

"What we really need in this part of the world is peace. We are a backward country here in Transjordan. We need time to educate our young people and develop our resources. We know we can live in peace with the Jews. But extremists on both sides will not have it so. I am afraid things have gone too far and that we must fight before we can settle down to the business of living together."

"What do you think the result of the fighting will be?" I asked.

Samir made a slight gesture with one hand as though tossing a stake upon a gaming table. "It's a gamble," he said. "We think we have a good army, but it is a very small army. We have three mechanized brigades. The Iraqis have sent us another. It is at Mafrak now."



I darted a quick glance at Sandy. This was the first confirmation we had had of the reported move of Iraqi troops into Transjordan to participate in the invasion of Palestine.

"Altogether," Samir went on, "we can put perhaps ten, perhaps twelve thousand effective combat troops into Palestine. We know that the Syrian Army is not efficient, and we do not think the Lebanese can do very much. We can count on the Egyptians for perhaps a couple of battalions, a few guns and a few aircraft—no more. And we ourselves have thirty days' ammunition and supplies. So if we are to win, we must win quickly. Say in two weeks we must have a decision. Otherwise we shall be on the downward curve of our supply situation, and we must begin to conserve our expenditures."

"I understand that your arms and equipment are all British," I said. "Will the British renew your supplies of ammunition and so on?"

"I don't know what the present status is," said Samir. "I'm no longer in the government, of course. But my guess is that they will not do so. Glubb Pasha has advised His Majesty not to take the risk of invading Palestine. I think that the pressure of world opinion will be such that the British Government will not give us additional means of carrying on war in Palestine. I think Glubb Pasha suspects this, and wishes to avoid the risk altogether."

"Then there is a chance that the King will come to that view?" Sandy inquired.

Samir shook his head. "No," he said. "The army will march. We will invade Palestine and do our best to prevent the establishment of a Jewish state. It is a duty which the King and our people owe to themselves and their fellow Arabs. If we do not move, the situation is quite hopeless and the Jews have an easy victory. We are the smallest and least wealthy of the states of the Arab League, saving perhaps Yemen, but we are the only state of the League which is pre-

pared to act effectively in Palestine in military terms. We cannot hold back."

The young man came back and said something which caused Samir to rise, excuse himself and leave the room. He returned in a moment. "The foreign minister is out of the city today," he said. "The deputy minister, Hussein Beg, is in his office now, and if you gentlemen will go there he will arrange for you to be received at the palace as soon as possible."

We asked him about the refugee problem. On the way to Jerusalem we had counted twenty-five truckloads of refugees and their belongings coming out of Palestine into Transjordan, in the two-hour drive from Amman to the Allenby Bridge. If that was a fair sample, the little Hashemite state must be pretty well overcrowded by now.

"It is a serious matter indeed for us," Samir admitted. "We must somehow feed these people, and we are doing that, so far. We cannot house them. You can see them camped on the hillsides everywhere, even sleeping in the streets of the city."

"What are they afraid of?" Sandy asked. "I don't suppose the Jews would massacre them if they stayed."

"They are simple people, and they do not understand what is happening," Samir said. "Many are from Jaffa, which has long been surrounded by the Jews and must fall to them, temporarily at least, as soon as the British leave. Others are from Arab villages in the Jewish zones; they do not want to fight the Jews, and they are afraid to stay there under Jewish rule, even for the time being. Still others are from Jerusalem, where the word has gone round that the Irgun Zvai Leumi has sworn to kill every Arab remaining in the city when the British leave. I doubt if that is true, but these people seem to believe it. So they run away. They do not all come here, luckily. There are thousands in Beirut, for example."

We rose to take our leave, feeling that we had spoken with a wise and capable man.

"If you have any difficulty at the Foreign Office, let me know," Samir said to me at the door.

The Transjordan Foreign Office occupies a small white building at the southern end of the city, opposite the Parliament House. Hussein Beg, the deputy minister, proved to be a rather hesitant young man who looked as though caution would be the ruling motive of any action he might take. He asked us a number of questions as to just why we wanted to see the King, and said he would telephone me at the Leslies' as soon as he had word from the palace. The only subject he would discuss with us freely was the wonders of the ruins of Petra and the possibility of increasing the tourist traffic to that Transjordan attraction.

Since we were getting rather low on gas, we asked him to give us a government order for ten gallons, which he said he would arrange.

"That rabbity so-and-so," said Sandy as we left the Foreign Office, "will do just exactly nothing."

We went to the Philadelphia Hotel to see how the boys were getting along. We found that Fitzsimmons had come over from Jerusalem during the morning. Bob Hecox had got his visa troubles straightened out with the Transjordan police. He said we'd done him a great favor after all, since there was a report that the King was going to review the Iraqi brigade at Mafrak and he could get some hot pictures. The news of the arrival of the Iraqis was not yet public property, but most of the correspondents had heard it by this time. If they hadn't, the fact that an Iraqi staff car carrying a brigadier's pennon was at that moment standing in the courtyard of the hotel should have enlightened them.

Sandy and I strolled downtown to try to find suitable presents for our kind hosts, the Leslies. A car roared up to the

curb just ahead of us and came to a stop before a cigarette store. Out of it jumped none other than Achmet Bey Sharabati, the Syrian minister of war, with a Syrian gendarme officer and three or four Transjordanians. The same impulse hit Sandy and me at the same instant.

With outstretched hands we marched up to Sharabati, whose face lengthened about a yard at sight of us. "Why, Achmet Bey," I cried, "how nice to see you!" I grabbed his hand and pumped it up and down. So did Sandy, also babbling warm greetings.

Of course the last thing on earth that Sharabati wanted was to be thus greeted by two Americans in the main street of Amman, surrounded by his local admirers.

"What are you two doing here?" he half snarled.

"Oh, just looking around, Achmet Bey, just looking around," said Sandy, in a tone which said we-understand-each-other-don't-we-old-boy?

"And what are *you* doing here, Achmet Bey?" I asked. "Another little conference, eh?" I winked ostentatiously. Sharabati could have shot me, I was sure, with the greatest of pleasure.

"Just a visit, just a visit," he snapped and ducked into the cigarette shop.

"Is Azzam Pasha here yet?" I called after him.

"No!" he yelled in a tone of baffled fury.

The Transjordanians were muttering and giggling. Sandy and I went on our way, quite pleased with ourselves.

"He won't hear the end of that for weeks." I chuckled.

We bought chocolates and brandy for the Lesliees and went back to the apartment to wait for our telephone call from the Foreign Office, which didn't materialize. Later we asked the legation operator to ring us at the hotel if anyone called, and took the Lesliees to dinner there. Norman Fox joined us. No telephone call came through.

"I told you so," said Sandy.

It was so cold that night that we shivered under two blankets apiece.

In the morning I called Samir Pasha bright and early. Sandy was beginning to get edgy about getting back to Damascus. This was Tuesday, and he was already one day overdue according to his instructions.

"So Hussein Beg has not called you?" said Samir. "Ah, then I shall have to take direct action. I'll ring you back in a few minutes."

Samir's idea of direct action included speed. In ten minutes the telephone rang.

"His Majesty," said Samir, "will be happy to receive you both at the palace at eleven o'clock."

I called Arab Legion Headquarters, and Glubb Pasha's adjutant said it would be okay to shift our date with Glubb from eleven to twelve, seeing as how a royal command had intervened. Then the Foreign Office rang up in an obvious flutter and said would we please come there at ten-thirty, so a suitable interpreter might accompany us to the palace. Samir had evidently stirred things up.

We went to the Foreign Office. Hussein Beg wasn't there. We found out afterward he was in Jericho attending a meeting of Palestinian Arab leaders. But another young man was waiting to receive us, and he had our order for ten gallons of gas clutched right in his hot little hand. The interpreter, however, hadn't arrived. The young man was full of apologies. He scurried to the back door, which opened on a weed-grown yard beyond which stood a row of small houses, for all the world like California bungalows in a new real-estate addition.

"Mahmud!" he howled. "Mah-mud!"

A small brown bare-legged boy dashed out of the nearest bungalow and came running. Our young man poured forth a

flood of Arabic, in very urgent accents. Mahmud stopped short, scratched his leg and then turned and trotted away at a much more leisurely pace.

The telephone rang incessantly, and our young man was busy answering it for a while. He seemed to be the whole of the Foreign Office staff on duty. The hands of the clock on the wall crawled around to 10:45. The young man got up and looked out the back door. He muttered and started pacing up and down.

There was a crunch of tires out front, and the young man raced into the hall. He came back beaming, with a man in a Palm Beach suit and a bright red fez, who announced smilingly that he was the court interpreter, and now we could go to the palace, please, to see His Majesty.

He decided to ride with us in our car, and Sandy didn't take long to negotiate the narrow streets of the city, and to climb the farther hill on which the Royal Palace stood. It was exactly one minute to eleven when we stopped in the graveled parking space outside the office of the court chamberlain, which is in a small building at the rear of the palace. We were ushered into an anteroom, in which every chair was occupied by a delegation of tribal chiefs, all wrapped in dusty brown robes and looking quite uncomfortable. Our interpreter hurried us straight through into a small hallway, where we were met by a smart young officer with highly polished riding boots peeping out from underneath the fringe of his flowing jelab.

"His Majesty's A.D.C.," said the interpreter. "This way, please."

We went out into a garden and walked across open ground toward the back door of the palace.

The Royal Palace of Transjordan is not a particularly imposing building. It is boxlike in shape and white in color, with gardens about it which are only tolerably well kept.

We went through a covered porch into a small reception room.

The A.D.C. said in fair English that His Majesty would come soon, and left the room.

We asked the interpreter if there were any special protocol in greeting the King.

"Foreigners usually just bow," he said, "and shake hands if the King offers his hand to you. Of course you can kiss His Majesty's hands if you like, but that is not required except for Arabs."

The A.D.C. flung open the door, spoke sharply and stood at attention. We rose to our feet.

A short, gray-bearded man in a gray robe and a spotless white turban glided through the door. The interpreter bowed very low. We bowed, not quite so low. The interpreter murmured our names. The King held out his hand, and we both shook it. The King beamed at us and personally led us to comfortable seats near the window.

My first impression of King Abdullah Ibn Hussein, probably the first personage in the Arab world today, was of a pair of intensely keen dark eyes, which, I imagine, miss very little of what goes on about him.

As previously arranged between us—because of Sandy's official status—I did all the talking for both of us after the usual exchange of polite words.

I began by saying that we had just come from a visit to Jerusalem, and that I knew that many people in the United States were most anxious about the safety of the Holy Places in the event of hostilities in Palestine.

The King said that such persons need have no fear, that Moslem guards had for centuries watched over the Holy Places when the quarrels of Christians had endangered them, and that he would not be unmindful of this traditional duty now. He spoke in a soft voice in Arabic, but I thought he understood quite well my English words—an impression which

deepened into conviction as the conversation proceeded.

"Then Your Majesty feels that there must be fighting in Palestine when the British leave?" I asked.

"There seems no other way," the King replied. "I have offered peace to the Jews on reasonable terms, and they answer with rifleshots. They must be taught a lesson. Then perhaps we can have peace."

He went on to speak of his duties toward the Palestinian Arabs. It was quite clear that he regarded himself as the natural lord and protector of them all.

After a little more of this I took a different tack.

After mentioning that I had talked with Azzam Pasha in Cairo, and making reference to his troubles in keeping the various states of the Arab League working in unity, I went on: "Doesn't this lack of unity seem to Your Majesty to be a source of weakness in the face of troubles such as these you are now facing? If instead of a lot of small countries, jealous of one another, there could be a larger Arab state under a strong leader, wouldn't that solve many problems?"

The King's face brightened instantly. Where he had been quiet and almost apathetic in speaking of Palestine, he now slid forward to the edge of his chair, leaned over, took my hand. His eyes glowed as though someone had turned on an arc light somewhere inside him. He talked rapidly.

"His Majesty is very pleased to hear you speak thus," the interpreter announced. "It shows that you have a good grasp of the Arab situation."

He went on translating the King's words: "Yes, unity is greatly needed. Things cannot go on as they are. It is a waste of money, of time, of effort. Iraq, Syria and Transjordan form a natural economic unit with nine million people and great natural resources."

This is the "Greater Syria" project which is the lodestar of Abdullah's ambition. There could be no doubt that he found



this subject highly stimulating. Syrian weakness, Iraqi political unrest, Egyptian apathy, Saudi Arabian caution and his possession of the only Arab army of any consequence: these are all keys to the unlocking of that golden door before which Abdullah has waited so long—or so I thought as the King talked on. Palestine is but another key, perhaps the reagent which would clarify the relationship and interaction of the other factors and afford the very opportunity of entering into the garden of his dreams for which Abdullah had been hoping.

For if the Syrian Army were to be defeated by the Jews, if the Iraqi Army fought under Abdullah's command, if Egypt acted halfheartedly and accomplished little, if Ibn Saud sat on the side lines, if Abdullah alone went in force to Palestine and there so conducted himself as to gain limited objectives in the occupation of Arab-inhabited territories while avoiding decisive battle with the Haganah—well, it was not hard to discern what would happen after that.

Listening to the King, watching the play of emotion on his clever face, I was reminded of Lawrence's estimate of him in his younger days: that he overlays each strand of woven intrigue with yet another, so that he never evolves a fully complete pattern. Age and experience had taught him greater wisdom, I thought. His patterns are still complicated, but they have form and substance.

I began talking of the Arab Legion, speaking of the fine reputation it enjoyed in foreign parts, and yet of how little really was known of it.

"My friend Major Sanderson and I would like to see something of Your Majesty's army, while we are in your country," I said.

The King smiled and nodded. "You have asked me this on a good day," he replied. "This afternoon I go to inspect the artillery regiment of the Legion at Zerka. Afterward I go to

Mafrak to inspect the brave Iraqis who have come to fight at the side of my men in Palestine. Would you gentlemen like to accompany me?"

I said we would like to very much. Which was a masterpiece of understatement.

While we had been talking, Fawzi Pasha el Moqri, the foreign minister, had come in and had taken over some of the translating job. Also coffee, in a beautiful golden service, had arrived. Now we had more coffee, and the King rose.

He shook hands with us again, and asked us to be at the palace at two o'clock, to join his inspection party. He patted me on the shoulder as if to indicate approval of my attitude concerning Greater Syria, and went out. Sandy and I were conducted back to the office of the court chamberlain, where we were asked to be discreet in mentioning anything His Majesty might have said to us (and I have been so, I hope). Then we just had time to get to Arab Legion Headquarters to see Glubb Pasha at twelve o'clock.

Brigadier John Bagot Glubb Pasha, commandant of the Arab Legion, is, like King Abdullah, a small man. He is wiry and tough-looking, with a scar on one side of his neck which may be from an old bullet wound. I don't know. He is not an easy man to talk to or one of whom a casual visitor asks personal questions. His rank of brigadier is from the British Army, from which, however, he has long since resigned. Actually his Transjordan rank is that of major general, though the title brigadier is still on the sign over his door.

He asked me my estimate of the Jewish fighting forces. I told him I rated them highly, as to discipline, organization and spirit.

He nodded. "I quite agree," he said.

I asked whether he thought the Legion was dependent on its British officers for efficiency.

"Almost entirely," he snapped.

"But if the Legion goes into Palestine—" I began.

"Who says it's going into Palestine? We're pulling out of Palestine," he cut in.

"Yes, sir, but I mean if it goes back there after May fifteenth—"

"Be damn foolishness," cut in Glubb again, twisting a string of Moslem beads in his hands as he spoke. "Too weak. Not enough supplies to follow through."

"Yes, sir, but just the same, if it does will the British officers go with it?" I said, talking very fast so as to get this question out before I could be interrupted again.

"Don't know," said Glubb. "Probably most of 'em won't."

There were at that time a total of thirty-nine British officers with the Legion; twenty-one of these were officers of the British Army, "seconded" for temporary duty with the Legion under the British-Transjordan treaty. The other eighteen were private individuals in the service of the King of Transjordan, though most of them had at one time held British commissions—at least temporary ones, during the war. Glubb apparently meant that the regular British officers would not be allowed to go into Palestine to fight, but that some of the others might go—and some did.

"But it ought not to happen at all," Glubb went on. "Too risky."

"The Legion wouldn't be fighting alone, sir. There are the other Arab states," I suggested, to draw him out.

He gave me a look of withering scorn. "Understand you've seen all the other Arab armies," he barked at me. "You think they're going to do any serious fighting?"

"No, sir," I admitted. "I don't."

"Then why should we stick our silly necks out?" he demanded.

"You said just now that the elements of the Legion at present in Palestine are being brought out," I said. "General

MacMillan told me he expected they'd all be back in Transjordan by the twelfth."

"That's the arrangement," said Glubb. "Doubt if we can complete the movement before the fourteenth, though."

I asked whether we could be given some idea of the numbers, organization and equipment of the Legion. Very little information had been available on this subject, and most of the estimates I'd seen were vague—also, as it turned out, inaccurate.

"Best way to do that is for you to talk with some of my staff officers," Glubb said. "I'll have Major Melville give you the details. Just wait next door, there."

We went into the next office, which was empty, and waited about twenty minutes. Then a youngish British officer came in, apologized for the delay and told us to fire ahead with questions, most of which he answered quite readily.

The Arab Legion at that time had four brigades, each with two infantry battalions, called "regiments" in the Legion. Two of these brigades were called mechanized brigades, but they were not really armored units as we understand that term. They were fully motorized—that is, they had enough motor transport to move the whole outfit—and to each battalion was attached a squadron of armored cars. No tanks, Melville told us. The other two brigades had just two ordinary infantry battalions each, with the normal scale of transport. I gathered—though Melville didn't say so directly—that these were the units which were then in Palestine. The artillery regiment was newly formed; it had sixteen 25-pounder guns, truck-drawn. There was one troop of horsed cavalry—the royal escort. There was a small engineer company, and a good many "works engineers," composed of some technical specialists and labor units. There were the usual signal, medical, supply, ordnance and other services. The first two brigades formed the 1st Division, headquarters Mafrak. No air

force. Total strength, including Arab Legion police, possibly twelve thousand officers and men. This didn't include the labor units and recruits under training, which latter could be used as replacements. The budgetary strength was twenty thousand but this had never been reached in practice.

Each battalion, at least in the first two brigades, had three rifle companies, a machine-gun company and a support company with mortars and 6-pounder antitank guns. The organization was British throughout, except that separate machine-gun battalions were not formed, as is the British practice.

Weapons: Lee-Enfield rifles, Bren guns (automatic rifles), Vickers heavy machine guns, two and three-inch British-type mortars.

When we had got all the details we wanted from Melville, we tried to find Glubb Pasha to take our leave, but he wasn't around and we couldn't wait, for we still had to collect our things at the Leslie's, grab a bite, get our ten gallons of gas and be at the palace at two o'clock. We asked Melville to say good-by for us and headed up the hill. Mrs. Leslie had lunch ready and a packet of sandwiches for the road. What a girl! We were, of course, intending to drive straight on to Damascus from Mafrak.

We collected Fox and a young British code officer from the legation, named Arthur, who wanted to go to Damascus, and our next stop was the only functioning gas station in town, operated by the Shell Company. As we approached it, my heart sank. There were at least fifty cars lined up, two abreast, waiting their turn. And it was already 1:40.

"Turn around, Sandy, and back right up to the pump. The hell with those blokes," said Arthur. "Give me your Foreign Office order. While you're backing in, I'll just have a word with the manager."

He hopped nimbly out as Sandy began to turn the car. There was a furious honking and loud outcries of rage as

Sandy backed up in front of the head of the line. Arthur came pushing through a jam of brown faces and waving arms, dragging the station manager by the sleeve and brandishing the slip of paper with the Foreign Office stamp on it.

The manager told the attendant at the pump to fill our tank. The crowd of waiting motorists closed in, howling with fury. They didn't see—and I don't blame 'em—why these foreigners should be taken care of out of turn, ahead of so many good and loyal subjects of the Hashemite King. Two of them grabbed the hose away from the attendant as he was about to stick the nozzle into our tank. Another—a hairy, skinny fellow in a dirty white suit—produced a knife with a blade about a foot long. I didn't know whether he meant to cut the hose with it, or our throats.

However, just to be on the safe side, I was reaching into the car for the jack handle, when Arthur, who had unaccountably disappeared, came into view again on the other side of the car. This time he had a sergeant and two men of the Arab Legion police in tow, and their spiked helmets looked better to me than they ever had before. The two privates pushed the crowd roughly away from the pump. The sergeant deftly kicked the knife wielder in the belly with his heavy boot. The knife wielder dropped his weapon, collapsed on the concrete and began to vomit, clasping his stomach with both hands and writhing horribly. Meanwhile the station attendant, taking opportunity by the forelock, pumped ten gallons of gas into our tank.

We thrust money into his hand—Arthur said it was too much, but we didn't feel like waiting for change—and we got into the car and removed ourselves from the scene of violence, followed by loud squalls of dislike from the crowd.

"That's the way to deal with these people," said Arthur. "Only thing they understand is a good smack on the jaw."

Just as we reached the turn of the road below the palace, a

little dark-red jeep, beautifully polished, came racing down the hill. It bore a sign: ROYAL ESCORT. Behind, came a sleek black Cadillac in which I could dimly see the white turban and gray beard of the King, accompanied by his A.D.C. Two more Cadillacs, filled with staff, followed. We fell in behind, congratulating ourselves on this timely meeting, and another red jeep, containing four soldiers and two machine guns like the one in the lead, brought up the rear. We were rather ashamed of our Chevrolet, which was filthy with three days' accumulation of Palestine and Transjordan dust and grime. In fact, it had a crust about a quarter of an inch thick. We didn't feel any better later on when we found that the jeep which followed us all the long miles up to Zerka and Mafrak had a sign on its back end reading in huge letters: ROYAL VEHICLE AHEAD! DO NOT OVERTAKE.

Our cavalcade raced through the gates of Zerka camp, passed a saluting, bugling guard and rolled out on the artillery practice range beyond the camp. Here the sixteen 25-pounders of the Legion artillery regiment were deployed, apparently for range practice. A guard of honor was drawn up to receive the King. One British officer and six warrant officers were in evidence, standing at attention a little distance from the guard. We saw our two friends among them, and as soon as the formation was dismissed, they came over to greet us. Sandy was taking pictures like mad.

"Are they going to fire the guns?" I inquired.

"No," said one of the sergeants major. "Just standing gun drill."

The King's party moved down toward the guns, which were some distance from the place where we had stopped. One gun crew went into action, going through the motions of inserting a shell, closing the breech and firing the piece. They did this several times, not very smartly. The King, however, seemed pleased.

After the King had greeted some of the officers, we got back into our cars and headed for Mafrak. It was a long, hot drive, but once clear of Zerka camp the King signaled for more speed, and we bowled along at a fair clip, receiving the salaams of all wayfarers.

When we reached Mafrak, there was no sign of any Iraqis. We passed the Arab Legion camp and headed out along the Damascus road. About a mile farther we saw the Iraqi camp, well off the road over to the right. A small aircraft was staked down near by, another was circling overhead.

The side road from the main highway to the camp was lined by Iraqi troops, standing at intervals of perhaps a yard. The leading jeep and the three Cadillacs turned in between these lines of soldiers, who came promptly to the present. We turned to follow, but an Iraqi officer stepped out and held up his hand. He motioned us to pull over to the side of the road, and for the jeep behind us to go on.

We became aware that four other cars, containing all the correspondents then in Amman, were also at the roadside. We got out and protested violently to the Iraqi officer, trying to make him understand that we were the King's guests. He just shook his head. Another officer, a major, who spoke English, came up.

"The brigadier," he said, "issued a specific order that only the King's car and those of the royal staff were to be allowed in the camp."

De Luce, Fitzsimmons, Hecox and several others were there. They said they'd been waiting an hour. The officer in charge of the guard was immovable. He had his orders, and he wasn't budging.

Then a motorcyclist came roaring down from the camp, hopped off, saluted and spoke his piece. The officer looked at us, tugged his mustache and waved us on. I think the King's A.D.C. had missed us and sent back for us, though I never did



find out for sure. Anyway, when we got under way all the other press cars started too, and nobody saying them nay, we trundled along between the lines of Iraqi troops to the edge of the camp. There we were just getting out of the cars when a loud-voiced second lieutenant came running over from the headquarters tent and said we all had to leave the camp right away. We said we wouldn't. I think this time some staff officer had seen five cars coming in when only one had been summoned, and decided this was too much of a good thing.

The English-speaking major arrived and said he'd speak to the brigadier. The lieutenant put in his oar again and was barked into sullen silence. He stood and glared at us, while the major went off to the headquarters tent. Presently came another messenger. We could stay. There was a great gathering of cameras, and we hurried off toward the sound of shouting which marked the progress of the royal party.

The King was walking through the camp, accompanied by a big Iraqi brigadier, Mohammed Tuleh, and followed by his own staff and a dozen Iraqi officers. He had already inspected the armored cars—there were sixteen good ones and half a dozen obsolete ones—by the time we joined him. Next came the artillery—eight old-type 75-mm. guns. The men were drawn up in front of the parked guns. As the King came along, they clapped their hands loudly and shouted what I suppose was the traditional greeting to royalty. This was repeated as each unit was reached. It was the first time I had ever seen troops at an inspection receive the inspecting officer by hand clapping. No doubt an old Arab custom. Sandy and Fitz were bouncing around in front of the royal progress, snapping their cameras at a great rate. Besides the armored cars and the guns, the brigade appeared to have just one infantry battalion, and about four hundred motor vehicles of various sorts, which had transported the troops and their

supplies. The total strength, including transport drivers, couldn't have been much over two thousand.

When the King had finished making the rounds, he sat under a canopy while the brigadier read him a long, prepared address. I couldn't understand a word of it, but it sounded very fierce and warlike in tone.

That was the end of the ceremony. We departed under the unfriendly eye of the lieutenant, who had been detailed to stand guard over our cars and wasn't happy about it.

When we reached the highway, the press delegation from Amman turned south; we waved good-by to them, turned right toward the north and bore away for the frontier and Damascus.

"Sandy," I said, as we drove along through the afternoon sunlight, "those people are going to make war. This little country of Transjordan is the key to this whole trouble just because they've got an army."

"Well," said Fox from the back seat, "you chaps are always complaining that we British are running Transjordan. You've seen how far that's true, though I don't deny we have a lot of influence at Amman. But if you Americans want to have influence there, too, why don't you recognize Transjordan and send an American minister to represent your views?"

I said I didn't know.

"The Transjordan boys are very sore on that point," Fox remarked. "They think you are treating 'em with contempt, and that's an idea that makes an Arab wild. You could do better if you had a legation at Amman."

It was certainly something to think about.

I thought about it a lot, incidentally, during the next few days, and I made some inquiries in what are known as "usually well-informed quarters." I found out that I wasn't the only thinker on the subject of what a good idea it would be

to recognize Transjordan and send a U.S. minister to King Abdullah's court.

One story, well authenticated, which I uncovered was pretty sickening.

Late in April, Tewfik Abu Rhuda Pasha, the present Transjordan prime minister, had called on a senior American diplomat stationed at a Middle Eastern capital. He had said, in so many words, that Transjordan sought U.S. diplomatic recognition and would do anything to get it. "Anything?" said our diplomat, thinking of peace in Palestine. "Anything," said Tewfik. "After all, you have the power in this world. Who are we to oppose you? But you must come and tell us what you want. How can we know your wishes when there are no channels of official communication open between our two capitals?"

The American diplomat rushed off a coded cable to Washington, relating this conversation and making strong recommendation that steps be taken to establish an American Legation at Amman. The reply was a cold and curt rebuke, for having ventured to converse with the prime minister of a country not recognized by Uncle Sam. A grave breach of protocol, our man was informed.

So another great opportunity went down the drain, thrown away—with a lot of valuable lives—by some official mind which couldn't understand anything except the sacred precepts of protocol.

We got back to Damascus that night in time for dinner.

Next day Sandy made his report to Colonel McGrath and was highly congratulated for a good job well done. I helped some with the report and wrote a long story for my paper, which I had to send by air mail to our London bureau to be wired to New York, as the Syrian Government had clapped on a tight censorship which forbade mention of any military or political matters in cabled press copy.

I had hoped to go to Cyprus next but was long overdue at Athens, according to my air-line schedule. I could just catch up with it, I found, by proceeding to Athens via Cairo on Friday afternoon's plane. So, much to my regret, I had to cut out the Cyprus stop.

I had a little trouble with the Syrian police, due to our having failed to check with the *sûreté* at Deraa on our way back from Amman, but I finally got my exit visa. That day the Syrian press began to denounce me for some stories which were being published in New York under my byline, so if they hadn't given me an exit visa they'd probably have tossed me over the frontier anyway in a day or so.

Damascus was, in fact, getting very jumpy. There were some hundred and thirty Americans and British there, including families, and it was quite in the cards that the mob might rise against them if more bad news came in from Palestine. It wouldn't be easy to get them out, either. I said good-by to Sandy and my other Damascus friends with some anxiety in my heart.

The Cairo plane made a stopover in Beirut. I was just able to catch a cup of coffee with our able minister, Lowell Pinkerton, and then flew on to Cairo, where I had expected to spend the night. I checked in at Shepheard's Hotel, thinking of nothing but dinner and bed. But fortunately, before heading for the grill, I also checked at the air-line office next door.

"I'm a passenger on your seven-thirty A.M. flight for Athens," I said. "Just checking."

"There's no flight for Athens at seven-thirty A.M.," the clerk replied. "What's the name? Eliot? Oh, you're booked out at eleven-fifteen tonight. If you get a cab and tell the driver to step on it, you can just get to Farouk airport in time."

I was tired and hungry, but there was no help for it. Out to Farouk airport—lately Payne Field, and not yet equipped

properly to handle passengers—I went. There was the usual delay. I fell into talk with an attaché named Jessup, from our legation at Jidda, who knew of my troubles about a Saudi Arabian visa and was properly sympathetic. He introduced me to a Miss Myrtle Winter, attaché of the British Embassy in Cairo, who had also missed her dinner due to last-minute farewells. There was a restaurant of sorts at Farouk, but no bar; and the service was very slow. We had to leave before we could eat. We were all very unhappy.

Then, an hour or more out of Cairo, the captain came back and sat on the arm of my seat. He bent over and said in a low tone: "We've got a fire warning in Number Three engine. We're putting back, and will land at Alexandria."

"Oh, goody," said Myrtle. "The Union Bar—oysters and a drink. I can't wait." Jessup began to wriggle with impatience. I could just see something like a nice thick English mutton chop right in front of me, flanked by a bottle of beer.

The captain came back again. "Sorry," he told us. "The damned Egyptians won't turn on the landing lights at Alexandria. We're going back to Cairo."

"To Farouk?" I asked. He nodded. Hell. No bar, maybe no food. But to Farouk we went.

We filed into the little restaurant, informed that we'd be there at least four hours.

I went up to the man behind the cashier's desk. "I know you don't serve liquor here," I said, "but couldn't you send a boy in a jeep over to Almazan airport—it's only a mile—and get us a bottle of whisky or maybe some beer?"

"Impossible," said the man. "I can't do it—" Here I took an American ten-dollar bill out of my pocket and laid it on the counter. "*But*," he continued without a break, "there is a bottle here that belongs to the manager, and I don't suppose he'd mind my letting you have it."

So we had something to drink—very passable American

whisky, and I got \$4.00 in change too—and we each had two orders of bacon and eggs after a while. We all felt much better, and we really enjoyed seeing the sun come up over the far-famed Isles of Greece.

There was nothing wrong with the plane, incidentally. The fire-warning unit just got oil-soaked and short-circuited.

## Athens and Salonika

*May 8-12, 1948*

ONCE again I had the sensation of having passed from one world into another, with different values, different hopes, different fears. In Syria and Transjordan and Palestine itself, Palestine was the subject of all military and political attention. In Iran that subject was Russia. In Greece it was "bandits"—which is the proper Athens term for the members of the organization which calls itself the Free Democratic Army of Greece.

It was difficult to realize that all these countries belonged, geographically, to a single region of the world, of which no part was more than a few hours' flight from any other, and in which the interest of the United States was single and direct as to any part of it—that, because of its commanding strategic importance, it should not become an area of Russian expansion or Russian infiltration.

There was a lot of mail from home waiting for me at the Hotel Grande Bretagne but no room. That was because I was so far behind schedule. I had had a reservation, but it was long since a forgotten thing.

Well, I had come to Greece to see something of our military aid to Greece, and something of the guerrilla war. I parked my bags in the hotel lobby and asked my way to the headquarters of the American Mission.

On the fifth floor of a huge building, occupying a whole block in the center of the city, I found the offices of the military group of the mission, Lieutenant General James A.

Van Fleet commanding. The general wasn't in, but Colonel Trimble, his military secretary, and Colonel Nussbaum, public-relations officer, quickly and efficiently took me in hand. In an hour I had a room and a bath in the King George Hotel, where the mission personnel was housed—"better than the G.B., they have hot water every morning instead of only three days a week." I had changed fifty dollars into 480,000 drachmas, in 10,000-drachma notes, which made me feel unaccountably wealthy, and I had appointments for the afternoon with General Van Fleet and Administrator Griswold.

There was little outward sign of tension about Athens. Hundreds of people sat in Constitution Square, sipping coffee or a whitish drink called (as near as I could get it) "oozis," which was of the absinthe family and the worst rotgut I ever tried. Plenty of uniforms, mostly Greek but with a fair sprinkling of American and British, were to be seen. The sun shone brightly, and the city was almost gay.

They don't care what happens, those people down in Athens, you'll be told in Salonika or up in the mountains; they don't care if all the rest of Greece is torn to pieces, so long as they can sit comfortably on relief or on the pension roll and loaf. Folks sing a bitter-funny song up there, which begins: "Oh, come with me to Athens, love, and be a refugee."

I asked for George Polk at the Grande Bretagne, and they told me he had gone to Kavalla, which is in eastern Thrace, well east of Salonika, on the sea coast. They said he was expected back soon, maybe in a day or two. I left word for him to get in touch with me at the King George. I had lunch with Brigadier General "Rube" Jenkins, an old acquaintance whom I'd last seen at the Infantry School at Fort Benning, and then went to call on the commanding general.

General Van Fleet looks like a soldier, and he is a first-class one. He came to Greece to take over what seemed almost a hopeless job. It is not so hopeless now. There were four dis-



tinct problems which faced him: (1) to find means of defeating the guerrillas; (2) to get the Greek Army and general staff to adopt and carry through those means; (3) to make enough progress so the American Congress would keep on supporting the operation; (4) to keep the Greek politicians from wrecking the whole business by going off at tangents or playing politics with army appointments.

Addressing himself to these four problems, General Van Fleet had, in six months: (1) found a tactical formula which, if persistently and methodically carried out, seemed to be the answer to the guerrilla war; (2) won the confidence of the Greek Army and general staff by demonstrating in the field that his plans would work, at the same time seeing that Greeks got all the credit; (3) won one quite large military victory and several small ones, so that even Congressmen could see a gleam of hope shining through previously impenetrable clouds of gloom; (4) gained enough prestige for the Greek National Army as a result of military successes so that the politicians let it and him alone more than had been their custom in the past, though in this phase of his efforts he had been notably less successful than in the three others.

The new tactical formula was the key to the whole business, and this is as good a place as any to describe how it works.

The great advantage possessed by the guerrillas is the nature of the terrain in which they operate: mountainous country with plenty of small tracks known to them but very few roads passable for troops laden with the heavy weapons and loads of ammunition which give regular troops their principal superiority over guerrillas. If attacked at any one point, the guerrillas simply slipped away and made trouble elsewhere. They could not be pinned down. Thus they came to dominate great areas of the interior of Greece, drawing their supplies from the villages which were more under their domi-

nation than that of the government, and which the government could not protect unless it was prepared to scatter its army in small detachments all over the countryside—which would leave it no mobile force to pursue guerrilla raiding groups. To this basic difficulty should be added the tendency of influential politicians to demand that a large chunk of the army should be stationed in their particular home town for its protection, and incidentally, of course, for the protection of the relatives and property of the politicians in question.

When, in December last, the American officers became responsible for advising the Greek general staff as to operational matters, their first thought was to take care of this problem of local defense. For this purpose fifty-two battalions of the National Defense Corps were raised, trained and armed. (This number has since been increased to a hundred.) These battalions are recruited from the local population, from men not subject to conscription into the regular army. By stationing them in the principal towns and larger villages, these can be protected from guerrilla raids, while leaving the army free to engage in mobile operations.

With these local-defense units ready, the tactical formula took shape. It consists in surrounding an area, instead of striking at a fixed point. When the area is completely surrounded by army forces, these close in toward the center, killing or capturing all guerrillas encountered. Even then, some slip through; but most do not. When the area has been cleared of guerrillas, National Defense Corps battalions are rushed to the larger towns and villages for permanent occupation. They assist in the mopping up. When the mopping-up phase is completed, the gendarmerie comes in and starts normal police work, road patrol and so forth. Thus the guerrillas, once eliminated from the area, cannot come back in any numbers, for they can find no support from the villages.

This formula is slow-moving and makes great demands on

man power. But it works, as has been demonstrated repeatedly during the six months General Van Fleet has been in Greece. It was tried first on a small scale, with forces of battalion or brigade strength. Difficulties of command, communication and supply were straightened out by the good old process of trial and error. In March a larger operation in the Mount Olympus area was only a partial success because of divided command; it is an axiom now that all troops engaged in any "operation box" must be under one command. The Olympus operation was repeated later that month, under single command, and was successful. Late in April, a really big operation box was launched, using three divisions (about thirty thousand men) on three sides of a large area in the Roumeli district, not very far northwest of Athens. The fourth side of the box was the Gulf of Corinth, patrolled by the Greek Navy. This operation was a great success. In two weeks, about twenty-five hundred guerrillas were killed or captured, at a cost to the Greek Army of one hundred and fifty casualties. The mopping-up stage was still in progress when I arrived in Athens.

Of course, I did not get all this from General Van Fleet at our first talk, but I did begin to gain an impression of the dimensions of the problem. Most of the tactical details I obtained at a briefing session in the operations room of J.U.S.M.A.P. (Joint U. S. Military Advisory and Planning Group) the evening of the next day. J.U.S.M.A.P. is so called because it co-ordinates the activities of the army, air-force and navy groups of the mission. General Van Fleet is in effective command of all three, under the over-all direction of the administrator, Dwight Griswold—generally called "the governor" in Athens because he used to be governor of Nebraska.

I had a talk with the administrator that afternoon in his apartment at the King George Hotel. On his floor and that where General Van Fleet lives, Greek plain-clothes men hover

in the corridors. The Greek Government is quite jittery since the recent assassination of Minister of Justice Christos Ladas.

Governor Griswold is a plain man. He lives and dresses simply and permits no ostentation. He is trying very hard to see that the money appropriated by the American Congress to help Greece is used to the best advantage. Differences of opinion between Griswold and Lincoln MacVeagh, until lately our ambassador at Athens, have impeded the work of the mission and American relations with the Greek Government. As to the rights and wrongs of these differences, I haven't grounds for any opinion. You can get into a hot argument any night in the Grande Bretagne bar just by introducing the subject with both an embassy man and a mission man present.

But as to one point there can be no reasonable argument: the situation made the position of the American military chief in Athens virtually impossible. He was supposed to receive his general directives through the administrator, yet in his contacts with the Greek Ministry of War and the Greek general staff, he was constantly encountering the conflicting policies and views of the ambassador. Major General Livesay, Van Fleet's predecessor, an able, experienced officer, was almost driven mad by this state of affairs. Fortunately for Van Fleet, MacVeagh's transfer to the Lisbon embassy occurred almost simultaneously with Van Fleet's arrival, and since then the embassy has been under Karl Rankin, as *chargé d'affaires*, who has tactfully kept out of the administrator's hair.

Governor Griswold has no illusions on the necessity of restoring order in the country as a preliminary to any real economic recovery. He gives first priority to military needs, and does what he can in other fields with what funds are left over.

I was supposed to do a broadcast that evening, but the cable from C.B.S. in New York did not reach me until about an hour before airtime. I dashed around to the broadcasting

studio, which is on the top floor of the post office building, and discovered that the Greek official in charge, on hearing that C.B.S. had requested a circuit, had tried to get in touch with George Polk, the regular C.B.S. correspondent, and failing to do so had thoughtfully wired C.B.S. in New York: "C.B.S. correspondent not in Athens and not available for broadcast"; whereupon the circuit had been canceled. I made this gentleman acquainted, in a few well-chosen words, with my inner opinion of his competence and went home to bed.

Next day was Sunday. I watched the Evzones, the kilted and magnificent bodyguard of the King, changing the guard at the Royal Palace, which lies diagonally across Constitution Square from the King George Hotel. Afterward I wrote two pieces for the *Post* (to make up for lost time) and struggled with the perennial problem of inducing telegraph clerks to believe that I was really authorized to file "press collect." This time they pulled a new one on me. From Athens it is cheaper to file via London, for relay to New York, than to New York direct, as the cables are British-owned, so that the much lower "Empire rate" prevails on the Athens-London circuit. So I submitted my stuff addressed "Newyorkpost London for Newyorkpost Newyork."

"No, no," said the telegraph clerk decidedly, poking his finger at the book wherein my status was set forth. "See, it says here you can file *New York Post*, New York. It says nothing about London. You can't file to London." And no argument could budge him from that position.

One of the nice things about Athens, to a wanderer from points east, was the presence of so many American girls—employees of the mission and other American agencies. I was introduced to two of them that evening, while listening to the band play in front of the Royal Palace—Betty McCluer of Virginia and Genevieve Doyle of Arizona. They were thoroughly enjoying their tour of duty in Athens and were getting to

know a good deal more about the world in which they must live and the terrific responsibilities of the United States in that world than they could know in any other way. I could not help thinking that the coming and going of so many young people with our various missions and other official agencies abroad might have a most useful effect on the thinking of American citizens when it comes to the long grim grind of facing up to those responsibilities during the years ahead.

Next day General Van Fleet was giving a luncheon at the Officers' Club for General Yiadjis, chief of the Greek general staff, and he kindly invited me to come. The three corps commanders (Lieutenant Generals Tsakalotos, Kalogeropoulos, and Gregoropoulos) also were present, together with the deputy chief of staff, Lieutenant General Kitralakis, the chief of the British Military Mission, Major General E. E. Down, and several Greek division commanders. All of the American officers assigned as advisers on operations to the various Greek corps headquarters were there, too, so altogether it was quite a gathering.

I was much struck by the good comradeship and cordiality displayed among the Greek and American officers. I had come to Athens rather prepared for strained relations, judging from some of the stories that had come out of Athens during the preceding year. I saw nothing of the sort. Quite the contrary, in fact. There was a friendly spirit of emulation among the various corps commanders and their American advisers, a lot of joking back and forth in bad English and—I am sure—bad Greek. In fact if it had not been for the language difficulty I might have imagined myself in an American officers' mess.

Of course the Greek officers present were those who had come through the grim test of the guerrilla war with credit and who on that account had earned the confidence both of their own government and the American Mission. There has

been a lot of weeding out of incompetent and politically minded officers in the Greek Army, but there are still some in high places on the staff and in the administrative services. There are few left, however, in high combat commands. For this, the influence of the military group of the American Mission, strongly supported by the British Military Mission, is largely responsible. I have no doubt that there are a good many Greek officers who have been relieved of commands they were incompetent to exercise who do not regard these missions with anything resembling cordiality.

In the evening there was a small dinner at the Yacht Club, which overlooks the ancient harbor where the galleys of Themistocles came back "with their garlands of victory around them" after the smashing of the Persian fleet at the Battle of Salamis in 480 B.C. General Van Fleet was again host, and the guests included General Kitralakis and Rear Admiral Snackenburg, head of the naval group of the U.S. Mission.

The next day I was early at the airport to fly to Salonika in a C-47 belonging to the air-force group of the mission. The purpose of the flight was to take Generals Yiadjis and Gregoropoulos to the headquarters of C Corps (which the latter commands) in order to be there to greet the prime minister, Mr. Sophoulis, who was coming up from Athens by sea, he being too old to care much about flying any more. Yiadjis, lean and gray, Gregoropoulos, pudgy and cheerful, climbed into the plane and were followed by Colonel Claybrook, Van Fleet's chief of intelligence, Colonel Nussbaum and me. The flight was a short one. At Salonika we were shown around C Corps headquarters by Colonel Holland, operational adviser to General Gregoropoulos.

There were six American and two British officers attached to this corps headquarters, and they worked together as one team.

There was, I found, a reason for this, but it wasn't because anyone had planned it so.

In general the British Military Mission is responsible for organization and training, the American Mission for operations, supply and communications, while intelligence is a sort of joint responsibility. In a setup like this, with the two missions responsible to their respective governments and with no combined plan or directive, there is every opportunity for friction, waste motion and general buck passing.

But the two generals, Van Fleet and Down, had come to a complete meeting of minds. They met every morning at eleven o'clock, exchanged views, made decisions, ironed out differences, and then until eleven o'clock next morning neither of them, by iron-clad agreement, would allow any Greek official to open up any new subject with him. Thus it was impossible for the Greeks to play one off against the other. As a direct and most valuable by-product of this agreement of the two generals, the American and British officers in the field could be used as members of one team, almost interchangeably, according to respective personal abilities.

It remains to be added only that we were lucky to have two generals of so much common sense in Athens, but that the matter should never have been left to chance. A combined mission, under the direction of the Anglo-American combined chiefs of staff, and operating under an agreement between the two governments, with a single chief, is the obvious requirement in the circumstances. That the present jerry-built setup works at all is just one more proof that the good Lord watches over the United States every now and then. |

Colonel Holland drove the other two colonels and me down to the pier to see the Prime Minister's ship come in. His Excellency arrived on a neat little minesweeper, was received by a naval guard of honor and by various dignitaries of the city of Salonika, and of course the two Greek generals. He



was driven straight to C Corps headquarters, where he was to address the troops of the national army stationed in the Salonika area.

I had a chance to talk with him at headquarters. He is a very old man—just how old, nobody seems quite sure and he derives some amusement from never being definite on the subject himself. His hair and mustache are snow-white and his steps are feeble, but his voice is clear and strong. I expressed the hope that he was not tired after his journey.

"Oh, no," he said with a chuckle. "But I'm not sure whether I'm safe up here in the north, now that the bandits are kidnaping children!"

The Prime Minister said over and over again how grateful the Greek people were for American help. He was confident that the military situation was changing for the better, "all due to you," he said. "We could never have done it alone. We did not have the resources."

There were many waiting to see Mr. Sophoulis, so I did not talk to him long. As I took my leave, he clung a moment to my hand. "Tell the American people 'thank you' from the bottom of Greek hearts," he said.

I paid my respects then to the Archbishop of Salonika, a fine old gentleman with a splendid beard, who brought out the keys of the city King Constantine in 1912 when Greece reconquered Salonika from the Turks during the First Balkan War.

Afterward I watched the review and thought the troops seemed fit and soldierly and marched well. Most of them had seen recent and arduous active service against the guerrillas, and they looked it. There were two battalions of infantry, a tank company and a detachment of sailors, as well as cadets from the military school.

An American lieutenant colonel and a British major, the intelligence officers on the advisory staff, explained the situa-

tion on C Corps' front (the eastern half of the northern frontier of Greece, mostly opposite Bulgaria) for my benefit. The bandits occupy a number of "pockets," each centering around a terrain feature (usually a mountain or a projecting mountain spur) backed up against the frontier. There were estimated to be perhaps twenty thousand of them in all Greece, of which something less than half were distributed along C Corps' front. There were anywhere from four hundred to twenty-five hundred bandits in each "pocket." They are organized on regular military lines, in battalions and brigades. The battalions average two hundred fifty men in strength, and brigades have two or three battalions. They are armed with rifles, automatic rifles, tommy guns, a few heavy machine guns, a good many mortars, mostly small ones, and a very few 75-mm. mountain guns. Of these last there were reported to be eight in C Corps sector. The presence of two 40-mm. automatic antiaircraft guns was also reported.

Bandit activity at this time was mostly movement, with a tendency to filter toward the west. The groups in the east were decreasing in size. It was evident that a considerable guerrilla concentration was being built up in the Mount Grammos area, on the Albanian frontier, which is in the sector of B Corps. This, as became plainer later on, was in anticipation of a major offensive by the Greek Army against the Grammos position, which has long been the headquarters of General Markos Vafiades, the rebel commander in chief.

I did not have a chance to see very much of Salonika, as after this briefing the two colonels and I went back to the airfield and our plane took off for Kosani, in Greek Macedonia, which is the headquarters of the 15th Division under Major General Laios. (Laios was then a brigadier; he was promoted about two weeks later, one of a list of fifteen brigadiers and colonels specially selected for promotion to major general because of proved combat efficiency.)

I have seen few such rugged and impassable stretches of country as the mountains between Salonika and Kosani. Looking down at them from the copilot's seat in our airplane, I could only wonder how military operations could be carried on at all in such terrain. There were few good roads, and the moment troops left the road it was a question of man-back or mule-back. Not even the good old reliable jeep could negotiate those mountain trails.

At Kosani the airfield has been built under American direction and is floored with steel mesh. Kosani is very near the fighting front—it is well up in the hills. We rode into town in a jeep with the division chief of staff and the American operational adviser, a young lieutenant colonel from Kentucky named Adams. General Laios was at his headquarters to greet us. He was not much older than Adams, a slender well-groomed officer with the look of command on his face which one grew to know during the war.

The advisory group at this as at most division headquarters included five officers. There was Adams for operations, an American major for supply, an American captain for communications and a British lieutenant colonel for organization and training. Another American captain (the intelligence officer) was away at the time. The British officer, Colonel McAlister, was from the Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders. The Greek mountaineers regarded his kilts with awe and respect, but they could never be brought to understand why he didn't wear pompons on the toes of his shoes like the Greek Evzones.

Kosani was linked with B Corps headquarters at Larissa, and with adjoining divisional headquarters, by radio; the operators were American noncoms.

Laios went over his particular situation on the map for us, and it was clear that there was very little that went on in his sector that he didn't know about. He had one small group of

guerrillas surrounded southwest of Kosani and was closing in on them, but he said there had been bad weather and he was afraid some of them would get away. Another group was marching and countermarching in the northwest, apparently trying to confuse Laios as to its intentions.

"They do a lot of that seemingly aimless moving about," he said.

But it was plain, from the grouping of his units, that he was even then preparing for his part in the big offensive against Grammos. He reproved me for speaking of the National Defense Corps battalions as "static" units.

"Not in my area," he said. "I make 'em get out and move where I need 'em. They're learning to be good infantry—send 'em anywhere."

"But do they have enough transport to be really mobile, sir?" I asked. The allowance, I knew, was only one truck and one jeep per battalion.

"Not enough transport," he snapped back. "Never enough transport for anybody. Carry more on their backs, that's all."

We had lunch with the general, during which I was delighted to see how Adams kidded him respectfully about eating so much and later on reproached him for exposing himself on the front lines so often. The relation was exactly that in our own army between a staff officer and a well-loved and respected division commander. It was a good sign.

When we got back to the airfield, a Greek ambulance plane was being loaded with wounded for transport to a hospital in Athens. These were casualties from the fighting to the southwest. They lay very still and patient on their stretchers, and it came to me suddenly that for them, this was just as much war as the big show that had ended on V-J Day.

The two colonels and I had got into our plane and the crew chief was about to close the door, when a Greek officer came running. "There's poor woman here," he said in fair Eng-

lish. "She mother of boy killed yesterday. Greek soldier. She want go Athens, you take her, please?"

"Of course we'll take her," said Colonel Claybrook, and got out of the plane to help the black-veiled, weeping little woman aboard.

She sat very still in her bucket seat all the way to Athens. The two colonels and I did not look at her much. We would have liked to tell her that we were sorry about her boy, but we had no means of doing so. I suppose, to her, we were just symbols of the cruel world that she did not understand, the power and the politics that had closed in on her little country and that had now taken her boy from her. After a while she stopped crying and sat staring straight ahead of her until the plane touched down on the airfield at Athens.

I took Betty McCluer to dinner at a little Greek tavern that evening, and we dropped in at the Grande Bretagne bar later. Looking at the crowd at the bar, Betty said: "I suppose if you sorted all those people out you'd find at least half a dozen who are working for the bandits." She was probably right.

I made fresh inquiries for George Polk but was told he had not been heard from. I thought this a little odd.

In the morning I called on the British ambassador, Sir Clifford Norton, who co-ordinates all British activities in Greece and works very harmoniously with American officials. Next I went to see Major General Down, commanding the British Military Mission, a forthright, hard-working officer with no nonsense about him. He has great admiration for Van Fleet.

My final call was at the headquarters of the U.S. naval group, where Rear Admiral Snackenburg kindly promised to send a message for me to the commander, U.S. Naval Forces, Mediterranean, my good friend Vice-Admiral Forrest Sherman, whom I hoped to see before I left the Mediterranean area. Snackenburg is working hard to help the Greek Navy meet its problems in connection with the guerrilla war. The

two chief naval jobs are coastal patrol and transport of troops and supplies. The guerrillas slip along the coast, sometimes coming down from Albania, in small craft loaded with men and weapons. Sometimes they lay mines or raid coastal villages.

To deal with these operations, the Greek Navy needs small, fast motor patrol boats and a few coastal minesweepers. A number of such craft have been furnished them by the United States, and crews trained to operate them. A big naval job was the movement by sea of the 10th Division from Salonika to the Gulf of Lamia to form the east wall of the "box" in the Roumeli operation. The operation could not have been successful without this sea move.

Sea transport is of especial importance to the Greek Army just now for two reasons: because of the bad condition of the roads and railways, which were left in horrible condition after the German evacuation and which the guerrillas have been blowing up on every possible occasion since, and also because it enables surprise to be effected, since sea movement is far easier to accomplish secretly than cross-country movement where large numbers of troops are concerned.

Admiral Snackenburg had a high opinion of the Greek as a sailor: "Born to it, most of 'em," he said, "and the officers are good, too. They're a seagoing people, have been for generations, and that's something you don't find everywhere."

But he had his troubles. One that was bothering him right then was the Greek naval staff's desire to take over the cruiser allotted to Greece under the Italian peace treaty and refit her for service in the Greek Navy. "The last thing they need," said Snackenburg, "is an eight-thousand-ton cruiser. She'd be just a white elephant, and they'd waste half their naval budget keeping her going, to say nothing of what it would cost to put her in proper condition in the first place. What they need here are small craft and more small craft. They can operate

twenty motor patrol boats with the eight hundred men they'd waste manning that cruiser. I've got to talk 'em out of it."

On the whole I left Greece with a feeling that the guerrilla war was pretty well in hand, and that the summer of 1948 would see the finish of General Markos' army as a large-scale organization.

This is largely because its supplies of man power are running out and cannot be replaced. Markos' men are not Bulgarians or Yugoslavs. They are Greeks—either confirmed Communists, or young men "on the loose" who figure that a guerrilla's life is no worse than what they face at home, or men impressed into service during raids. The first class are limited in number and losses cannot be replaced. The second source of supply is drying up both as economic conditions improve (even though not much) and as the guerrilla life becomes more dangerous and less attractive. The third source also is drying up as the area in which the bandits can operate freely becomes more strictly confined.

Of course if Greece's northern neighbors (Bulgaria, Yugoslavia and Albania) decide to do what they have not so far ventured to do, and put their own men into the field in Greece, then we and the British have a different and far more serious situation on our hands and must decide what steps to take to meet it. But barring that, the bandit army seems likely to dwindle rather than increase, and it is certainly facing additional and even more severe defeats in the field than those it has so far suffered.

The Greek Army has a total strength of 130,000 men, exclusive of the National Defense Corps battalions, which add another 50,000. It has eight divisions, and three independent brigades. These operate under three corps commands and the separate military command of the Peloponessus. Its arms are British, except for some batteries of American mountain guns and a considerable number of American 50-caliber machine

guns. Its organization is also British—three battalions to a brigade, three brigades to a division. Divisions have from twenty to twenty-four guns. There is some armor but not much, as it is not of great use in the mountains except for special opportunities.

The Greek Air Force has three squadrons of Spitfires (fighters) and a transport squadron.

These forces are not large, but they are well organized and well trained, and the morale of officers and men has been immensely raised by their recent successes, while bandit morale has correspondingly decreased. Bandit prisoners whom I saw at Kosani were uniform in saying, "Markos finished." Some of them, including one officer, had deserted to the national army because, as they said, it was just no use fighting any longer. No doubt the bandits will go on fighting, some of them, for a time. But I must say that I agree with the view that Markos is, for all practical purposes, "finished," and that the people of Greece will soon have a chance to try to rebuild, in reasonable security, their shattered homes and lives.



## Istanbul and Ankara

*May 12-19, 1948*

ISTANBUL was something else again.

The center of attention switched back to Russia, as in Iran. But the Turk sees Russia through different spectacles than the Iranian. The Iranian is afraid of what Russia may do to him. The Turk looks back on four Russo-Turkish wars since 1825, and grimly tells you what he will do to the Russians if they come again. The hatred of Russia in Turkish hearts is a tangible, definite, living force. There is scarcely a family in Turkey which has not its memory of father, grandfather or great-grandfather killed fighting the Russians. Such memories live long in Turkey. "*Voici le sabre de mon père*" is more than music-hall refrain in the village homes of the tough peasants of Anatolia, backbone of Turkish strength. Any one of them is quite prepared to take grandpappy's rusty old sword down from the wall and go forth to do what he can with it, in default of anything better.

Practically the sole purpose of the American Mission for Aid to Turkey is to give the Turkish soldier something better. The Greek Mission has both military and economic branches. The Turkish Mission is almost wholly military, at present anyway; though that may change.

The British plane from Athens landed me at Istanbul airport under a heavy overcast. I had a distressing reminder of London prices en route, when I had to cough up seven-and-six (about \$1.50) for what the steward laughingly called "a double whisky," the net result being about a thimbleful. Leo

Hochstetter, the C.B.S. man in Istanbul, and Huntington Damon, the young and very well-informed boss of the U. S. Information Service Office, were at the airport to greet me, which was a good thing for me, for when I came to the immigration officer I discovered to my horror that the validity of my Turkish visa had expired. Damon was able to fix things so that I could go on downtown, with instructions to call on the Security Police next day and get the visa extended.

I had a reservation at the Park Hotel, where they gave me a room with a terrace overlooking the Bosphorus—a magnificent view, with the opening of the Golden Horn and the sultan's palace on the right, then the wide stretch of water with the ferryboats plying back and forth and shipping anchored offshore, the Sea of Marmara shimmering away to the south, the distant shape of the islands and the green shores of Asia, broken by white walls and red roofs, lying opposite.

I dined with Leo Hochstetter and his tall brunette wife Genevieve that evening. The other guests were a young Turkish couple, whom I knew only as Reza and Mrs. Reza. I am sure they must have some other name though I never heard any other that I could fix my mind on, but no one could possibly have been kinder or more ready to do anything at all to help me. Leo, it turned out, knew everybody in Turkey and had an extraordinary facility for getting along with everybody. He introduced me to a local drink, called a "screwdriver"—a simple thing, half vodka and half orange juice. It is the favorite tippie of Americans and Britishers in Turkey for the excellent reason that whisky is very expensive and good whisky hard to get, the gin is vile and the brandy horrible. But in the screwdriver, the orange juice does something which makes the vodka palatable, and the vodka supplies the kick. We played bridge after dinner. I didn't distinguish myself—too many screwdrivers.

Next day was pretty well wasted with the complications of

getting my visa revalidated and extended, of arranging for air passage to Ankara, the Turkish capital, next morning and making sure that I was on the sacred list of those who may file "press collect." In the afternoon I called on Celal Bey, deputy chief of the Turkish intelligence service, a shrewd, friendly man who sits at the center of a many-threaded web.

In Athens I had heard, from Greek intelligence sources, the first hint that all might not be roses and perfumed notes between Marshal Tito of Yugoslavia and the Kremlin. I tried this on Celal, and gathered from his reply that he had heard similar reports and was leaning over backward trying not to believe them lest he fall into the worst error of an intelligence officer: wishful thinking. He said that refugees were constantly arriving from Bulgaria, not in large numbers but a steady flow. "Of course we screen them all very carefully," he added. "There's no device dearer to the hearts of our Communist friends than planting a really capable agent in the camp of the opposition by sending him over as a 'deserter' whose conscience has compelled him to turn against the Kremlin and all its works. They've evolved quite a convincing technique for this little trick. Sometimes we catch up with them. Sometimes we can't be sure. Very rarely do we become completely convinced of the good faith of any of these boys who come to us with hard-luck stories."

I reflected on the increasing number of such characters who are currently turning up in the United States, and I hoped that some of Celal's healthy skepticism might be reflected in official attitudes at home.

Celal thought that Communism, as such, had absolutely no chance of taking root in Turkey. "It's too thoroughly identified with Russia," he said, "and no Turk will touch with a ten-foot pole anything which has a Russian smell about it."

Later, Leo and Reza went with me to call on a Yugoslav ex-officer, whom Leo knew and who was certainly passionately

anti-Tito. He scoffed at the tales of a Tito-Kremlin break. "Tito is just the creature of the Kremlin," he assured us. "He is too well-indoctrinated a Communist to think of taking an independent line. You don't realize what Communist discipline means."

"Yes, I do," I said, "but I also realize what almost unlimited power can do to any human being who possesses it. There have been rebels before this against discipline as strong as Moscow's."

"Tito will never rebel," the Yugoslav said with conviction. "It is not so much that he wouldn't dare, but it wouldn't occur to him as possible."

I sent off some copy that evening and left by an early morning plane for Ankara.

Istanbul is an old, old city, living on its memories of a splendid past, when it was Constantinople and Byzantium and the seat of emperors and sultans. Ankara is a new city built in the shadow of an old one. The old one, with its grim citadel, sits on a hill looking down on the plain where the new city stands.

Driving into the broad streets of new Ankara, through a neat residential district, past well-constructed public buildings and a railway station which looked exactly like a dozen union depots I could recall in the States, I said to the American attaché who was riding with me, "Why, this town could be in Kansas!"

That's any American's first impression of Ankara. It looks like a medium-sized Middle Western American city—say Topeka or Lincoln. It is only when you look a little closer that you begin to see some differences.

Ankara isn't quite finished. The chinks aren't filled in. It was built by Kemal Atatürk, "Father of the Turks," as a symbol of the modern Turkey, the Turkey which has turned its back on the past and therefore, symbolically, moved its capital

from cosmopolitan Istanbul to the heart of the Anatolian plateau where most of the Turkish people live. But the war interrupted the work of completing the capital. There are plenty of unfinished buildings. There are raw, open spaces around and between them. And you can see a hundred men squatting in the sun beside the half-erected walls of a new schoolhouse, laboriously chipping stones with little hammers. That's something you won't see in Kansas. Turkey is trying to jump from the Middle Ages into the machine age in one generation. It's a long jump. As a British officer said, "You can find people only an hour's drive from Ankara who seem just a few years removed from caves. And the provincial cities, Erzurum for example, are unbelievably primitive."

Turkey has nevertheless made a good start. Everything in Turkey dates from the establishment of the republic. There is immense pride in what has been accomplished—and justified pride. But there is a long way to go yet before Turkey can become the modern state of which her more enlightened leaders are dreaming.

The principal hotel of Ankara, called the Ankara Palas, was more like a second-class European hotel than anything American. After checking in, I went at once to the embassy, which occupies two quite ordinary-looking buildings on Atatürk Boulevard, the "main drag" of Ankara. The press officer, Laurence Moore, received me with great kindness. The ambassador, he told me, was away until Monday, but he would immediately set the wheels moving to get me an interview with the foreign minister. Meanwhile, I could see something of the American Mission.

The American Mission for Aid to Turkey, I found, had only one civilian boss—the ambassador, Edwin C. Wilson. But it had three military parts: the ground-force group, under Major General Horace L. McBride, the air-force group, under Major General Earl S. Hoag, and the navy group, un-

der Rear Admiral Thomas G. W. Settle. The senior officer of the three was supposed to act as "co-ordinator" in case of any difference of opinion. There was no one officer with command responsibility over the whole, as Van Fleet had in Greece. This "co-ordinator" device doesn't work any better than you would expect it to. Almost the first thing I heard on arriving in Turkey was that the ground-force and air-force groups weren't getting along at all well, with the ground-force people saying the airmen were trying to crowd them out of the picture, and the air-force people saying that McBride (who happens to be the senior of the three group chiefs) was discriminating against them.

I wasn't in Turkey long enough to get the rights and wrongs of this argument, but I was there long enough to know that bad feeling does exist, and that an American mission in a foreign capital is no place for interservice bickering, which God knows makes trouble enough at home. I might add that no blame attaches to the ambassador for not settling the argument, since the matters at issue are of professional military character, which should be settled by a directive from the joint chiefs of staff, or failing that, by the Secretary of Defense. I thought all the chiefs of mission groups seemed competent, each in his own line of business, however much they might be temperamentally unfitted to get along with one another. McBride I found positive, steady, self-assured, a man who dreamed no dreams but built carefully and firmly, brick by brick, on the established foundations of experience. Hoag was an aggressive airman, believing devoutly in the future of his arm, with boundless energy and enthusiasm and the ability to transmit that energy and enthusiasm to others. Settle was quiet, competent, a naval aviator who knew his work, stuck to his own job and meticulously avoided being drawn into controversy.

It was a tribute to the individual gifts of each of these three

officers that despite some lack of agreement as to policy, the work of the American Mission for Aid to Turkey was proceeding as well as it certainly was.

Turkey is the keystone of our Middle Eastern policy—the policy which has for its central aim the permanent damming of the Russian tide which presses, as it has for centuries, toward the crossroads of the world. If the dam ever breaks, that Russian tide will pour irresistibly down across the main line of communications from Europe and Asia, into Africa, into the oil fields of Arabia and the Persian Gulf, and he who is master of Russia will be master of the world—or most of it.

To hold back this tide had for more than a century been the major objective of British policy in the Middle East. Now, for reasons as cogent as those which had compelled successive British governments to face bitter criticism at home for their support of the Ottoman Empire, we found ourselves required to seize the torch from Britain's weakened hand and to continue to stand guard over the Middle East, lest the world in which we lived should be distorted into a new and perilous shape. For us, as it had been for Britain, our principal local asset in this task was the Turkish soldier. His fighting qualities were the cornerstone of our structure of security.

But the Turkish Army, when our mission came to Turkey, was an army of World War I ideas and World War I armament. Its older officers looked back to past accomplishments rather than forward to new horizons. It was capable of dying bravely. It was wholly incapable of engaging in modern warfare. The Turkish Air Force was almost nonexistent as far as any effective combat potential went. The Turkish Navy had a few good ships, but its officers had equally old-fashioned ideas, and there was no Turkish naval aviation.

To defend herself against either German or Russian aggression, Turkey had during the whole of the late war kept her

army fully mobilized, and still has some 600,000 men under arms. This is too great a strain on the man power, to say nothing of the finances of a country with a population of only 19,000,000. Moreover, it is an attempt to substitute numbers for efficient armament. To correct this balance, to give the Turkish soldier weapons which will enable him to make the best of his fine qualities, and to build up in Turkey a resistant power which can act as a real deterrent on aggressive thinking in the Kremlin, is the task our missions have undertaken.

I talked at length with all three group chiefs of our mission, with many of their subordinates and with Turkish officers. The details I give you now are the sum total of the conclusions reached from these conversations and from personal observation.

The ground forces are the foundation of Turkish defensive strength, since the objective is to prevent the overrunning of Turkish territory by Soviet armies, even to make the idea of attempting such a thing unpalatable to Soviet military planners. But an army of 600,000 men cannot be rearmed overnight, especially when only \$95,000,000 is available for the purpose—even at ten per cent of cost for surplus equipment. What can be done is to build up a well-equipped, well-trained nucleus—a striking force, with adequate transport and enough armor and artillery, supported by a good tactical air arm. Other troops, not so mobile, not so well equipped, can be employed to hold the frontier positions and fortresses, where the terrain favors a delaying action. The striking force can be held in reserve, to hit the invader when opportunity is ripe and after the first onrush has been blunted by the forward defenses.

In addition, there will be required special provision for the antiaircraft defense of seaports, rail junctions, airfields and other crucial positions within the country. Reserve elements



must be armed and trained to deal with air-borne invasion. When all this has been accomplished, Turkey will be an unattractive object for Russian aggression.

Such armed forces might well be smaller in numbers, considerably smaller, than at present. This would represent an economy in man power. But it wouldn't represent a considerably less costly army. It costs money to maintain and operate modern war equipment. It costs money to maintain schools to train officers and specialists. And you can't—even in Turkey—give a man high-class technical training and then pay him forty cents a month as a soldier. That's the present wage of the Turkish conscript.

All these planned improvements cannot be made quickly, either. At present only a beginning has been made. As one American ground-force officer put it: "Right now, the Russkys would roll through here in a couple of weeks. A year from now, Johnny Turk could make a real fight—maybe hold 'em off a couple of months. In two years, if Congress doesn't cut our appropriations too much, the Turks could defend the plateau of Anatolia for six months, which really means a year or more, because you can't fight in this country in the winter-time."

And an air-force officer added, "Yes, and if this Anatolian plateau could be held that long, and we could operate American long-range bombers from it on a large scale, we could tear the lights and liver out of the principal industrial area of European Russia: the Ukraine and the Donets Basin, to say nothing of the Baku oil fields. It's all within comfortable reach of Turkish air bases."

"If we could keep the supplies rolling in," said a naval officer.

In this as in other conversations with American officers in Turkey and elsewhere in the Middle East, it should be clearly understood by the American reader that these officers are not

planning to start a war with the Soviet Union. Their constant purpose is to prevent war by making war obviously unprofitable from the Kremlin's point of view.

Sea-borne supply is one of the prime problems to be dealt with in making Turkey defensible. There is little or no military industry in Turkey. The newly mechanized Turkish Army, the Turkish Air Force and any American force that might be based there, would in war all be dependent on a steady flow of supplies coming by sea through the Mediterranean. It is probable that American and British air and sea power could keep the Mediterranean route open for shipping. But to bring ships to Turkey is one thing. To unload those ships rapidly enough and transport their cargoes inland to where they are needed is quite another.

Turkey today has only three seaports of really considerable capacity: Istanbul, Izmir (Smyrna) and Iskenderun (Alexandretta). Only at Iskenderun can ocean-going cargo ships go alongside a dock to unload, and there is room for only two at a time. At the other two ports, ships must unload into lighters. Moreover, Istanbul and Izmir are on the western fringe of the country, and Iskenderun lies at its extreme southeast corner, cut off from the interior by the vast barrier of the Taurus range. Istanbul and Izmir are within easy reach of even medium-range Russian bombers operating from bases in Bulgaria. One of the major reasons for our anxiety over the security of Greece is because access to Istanbul and Izmir could be completely cut off by any hostile power which came into control of the Greek islands in the Aegean Sea. Even as it is, these ports are dangerously exposed.

Thus improvement of the capacity of Turkish seaports, especially Iskenderun, and of the road system leading inland from these ports, is a major consideration in Turkish defense.

Late in the afternoon of my first day in Ankara, Moore took me to call on the chief of the Turkish Press and Information

Bureau, Izzetin Bey, who gave me my official Turkish press card and was most kind and cordial. I suggested to him that I would like, if possible, to get an interview with the President of the republic, Ismet Inonu. Izzetin said this was very difficult, that the President had not received a non-Turkish correspondent for two and a half years, but he would see what could be done. Later that evening I went to Serge's, Ankara's only night club, with Altemar Kilic, a young Turkish newspaperman who is the Ankara correspondent of the A.P. Sacha, the talented pianist, a Russian exile who is universally popular in Ankara, played some old familiar American pieces for me. Colonel Jim Ferguson, of our air mission, and Wing Commander Maude of the British air attaché's staff, with their pretty wives Marcella and Juliette, came over to join us at our table. We had a few screwdrivers—not too many, for I was learning to respect the screwdriver. Ferguson and Maude had to go to Istanbul next day, they told us, to help supervise the landing of a hundred P-47 fighter planes for the Turkish Air Force which were arriving in Istanbul aboard the U.S.S. *Siboney*, an escort carrier. All these folks knew Leo Hochstetter well, and we all wished he could be with us. He certainly knew how to make friends and influence people.

Next morning, with seaports and roads still fixed in my mind, I went to call on the minister of public works (now minister of communications in the new cabinet) Kasim Gulek. The Ministry of Public Works is one of Ankara's fine modern public buildings, and I found its chief in a most comfortable and well-appointed office on the second floor. He speaks perfect English, and he began to talk roads to me right away. Of the \$100,000,000 in our first Turkish Aid program, \$95,000,000 is for strictly military expenditures, but \$5,000,000 is for the development of a road program. This was Kasim Gulek's baby, and no child ever had more tender and loving care.

"Turkey needs roads for defense," he said, "so that our troops may move about inside the country, so that when we build up our mobile striking force it may strike with speed and effectiveness and arrive in time at its objectives. But that isn't all. Turkey needs roads for her internal life, too. Why should a peasant have to spend a whole working day toiling over mud tracks with his donkey cart to get his produce to market and get back home again? It doesn't make sense. We have a pretty good railway net." He pointed to a map on the wall. "We've trebled our railway mileage since 1918. We don't require extensive additions to it, but rather improvement of the existing system and roads to supplement it. We need feeder roads branching out from the railway stations into the countryside, and arterial highways for long-distance haulage. We hope to build up our trade—that means roads. We hope to produce coal in quantities sufficient not only for internal use but for export—we can't distribute it to those who need it without roads."

He got out another map, illustrating in three colors the three phases of the Turkish road program: a total of 22,000 kilometers of projected roads, to be built over a period of nine years in three increments of about 7,000 kilometers each. The map showed that the first three-year program comprised trunk roads between the major cities in the interior but not in the frontier regions; the second three years would see the building of feeder and connecting roads; only in the third three years would any new roads at all be built in the areas near the Russian, Bulgarian or Iranian frontiers.

"At the end of six years," the minister said, "we shall know whether the situation has become sufficiently stabilized for us to take such risks safely. Meanwhile there is no use our building invasion highways for the benefit of the Red Army."

The minister emphasized that there was no intention of building anything fancy. "No roads that we can't maintain

in all-weather condition, year round. No four-lane concrete highways, but good serviceable gravel and sand-surfaced roads, properly drained and kept up. The Turkish people are road-conscious now. Traffic has increased one hundred seventy per cent from 1946 to 1948. We've just got to get busy."

I asked him about port development. He talked mostly of Iskenderun, and of the development of two additional small ports—Karatash and Yumurtalik—on the west side of the Gulf of Iskenderun. Feeder roads were being rushed to connect these ports with the main road system, leading north over the mountains, directly into the area where the main Turkish effort against a Russian invasion from Transcaucasia would be likely to center.

But his thoughts were not running altogether on military lines. "There's a big development possible in this region between the mountains and sea," he said, moving his finger back toward Iskenderun on the map. "Flood control, reclamation, irrigation. We can make this a garden land, and a productive garden. It will take money, but it will be a paying investment. And there's every opportunity to develop hydroelectric power there, too."

I thought that Mr. Kasim Gulek was a go-getter, and a good man for Turkey to have around as she began to emerge from the Middle Ages in which Turks had lived so long.

When I got back to the hotel, Altemar Kilic was waiting for me, all excited. "Leo's coming," he said. "He'll be here on the three o'clock train."

"Leo Hochstetter?"

"Yes, yes. Leo. He's going to Erzurum. I've just had a wire. The train stops here for half an hour. Don't you want to go and see him?"

I said of course I did. Erzurum is in northeastern Turkey, not far from the Russian frontier. It is the jumping-off-place,

so to speak, for Kars and Batum, also for Kurdistan and the long rough mountain road into Iran. I remembered that Leo had said something about going there, but I hadn't realized he meant to go so soon.

Kilic and I went down to the station at three o'clock. The news had got around. Others of Leo's friends were there, including Marcella Ferguson and Juliette Maude. Leo was on the Erzurum train, all right, when it pulled in. He was in high spirits. He had a deal arranged with Bob Low, of *Time*, whom I'd last seen at a cocktail party in New York where we'd made a date to meet in Athens on April 24. But I'd missed him in Athens and Istanbul too. Now Bob was in Erzurum, waiting for Leo, with a station-wagon jeep. They were going to drive through Kurdistan to the Iranian frontier and on to Teheran. I wished I could go with them. It sounded like fun, and it was a part of the world that might be very important to know about before long.

We talked with Leo until the stationmaster blew his tinny little whistle and the train gave a preliminary jerk. Leo climbed aboard then, and when the train had puffed out of the station we all went into the beautiful garden next to the station and sat round a table and drank a screwdriver apiece to wish him luck on his long journey.

I did a broadcast that evening from Radio Ankara. The arrangements were very good and the equipment first-class. The signal from New York came in clear as a bell. After the broadcast New York came in again on the feedback and Ed Bliss, at the news desk at 485 Madison, told me that George Polk had disappeared, had not been heard from for days.

Next morning as I was hammering out a piece for the *Post* in my hotel room the telephone rang. It was Izzetin Bey.

"We've just had word," he said, "that one of your colleagues has met with a sad end in Greece. George Polk. His body was found by the shore at Salonika. He had been shot

in the back of the head. I am very sorry to tell you this bad news."

I felt sick. After a while I finished my story, took it to the telegraph office, went back to the hotel and sat on the terrace looking at the flowers. I wasn't much good the rest of that day.

Next morning Moore called me and said that Mr. Necmeddin Sadak, the foreign minister, would receive me at eleven. I had previously submitted a list of questions, as requested by the foreign office, and when I went in to see the minister I found that he had nice stereotyped answers ready for me, the net effect of which informed me (1) that there had been no perceptible change in Russian policy toward Turkey since the advent of the new Russian ambassador a few weeks before, (2) that Russia had not given any indication of a desire to reopen the question of the straits since the last Turkish refusal to consider a new regime for the straits on Russian terms—which included Russian participation in their defense, meaning in plain words Russian military bases on Turkish soil, and (3) that Russia had not, as she has in Iran, made any official kick about the presence of U.S. Military Missions in Turkey.

Then the foreign minister leaned back in his chair, smiled gently, and we began really to talk.

Necmeddin Sadak is a clever and quick-minded man, formerly editor of the Istanbul daily, *Aksam*. Much of what he said to me was off the record and must remain so, for he touched on issues as yet unsettled. But I gathered that, like Kasim Gulek, his interest in American-Turkish relations went far beyond the military aspect.

"It will not be much permanent help to Turkey, Mr. Eliot," he observed, "if your country enables us to build up military forces which we cannot thereafter support. The only sound foundation for military strength is economic strength. We cannot continue as a purely agricultural country. We

must be able to trade, to use our resources in the world markets, to buy and sell. We have a hard-working people, and we have natural resources. We are, I think, a good investment for American capital. I don't mean a gift, I don't mean a loan—I mean investment on a sound business basis."

"But your laws, at present, Mr. Minister," I said, "make it virtually impossible for foreign private capital to be invested in Turkey. The restrictions are impossible, since all profits are frozen in Turkish lira, and the taxation is ruinous in character."

"I know," he said. "This was done when we wanted to be self-sufficient, when we wanted above all to get rid of the influence of foreign capital, which had in the past brought Turkey more grief than good. But we trust America, Mr. Eliot. We would like to have you working with us. We do not believe you have any imperialistic designs. Those laws of which you speak will be changed, though it will take time and there are many long-seated prejudices to be overcome."

Of Palestine the foreign minister said that Turks felt a natural sympathy for their Arab co-religionists, but that the translation of this sympathy into active assistance was and would remain out of the question. Turkey was in no position to take on additional difficulties and involvements.

When I left the foreign minister's office, his secretary said that the minister of public works had called and asked that I come to his office at twelve o'clock. I went there at once, and Mr. Gulek was waiting in the entrance hall for me.

"I thought you ought to see the President," he said, "and His Excellency has consented to receive you now."

I couldn't have been more pleased, and thanked the minister warmly. I didn't bother asking him how he knew where to find me; by that time I'd realized that the whereabouts of any foreigner in Ankara are well known to the Turkish authorities from hour to hour.



The President's palace in Ankara lies at the upper end of Atatürk Boulevard, on a hill commanding a fine view of the new city. I was taken up a curving stairway and along a bright gallery into a long narrow room with big windows.

Ismet Inonu, the intimate friend of the late Kemal Atatürk, who succeeded to the presidency after the death of that great founder of the Turkish Republic in 1938, came forward to greet me and took my hand in both of his as he bade me welcome.

He is a slight, spare, graying man with a clipped gray mustache. His face is lined and rather careworn (he is sixty-seven), but his jaw is strong, his eyes clear and bright.

We talked at first of the usual things—of American aid to Turkey, of Russia and the straits, of the road program, then of Russia again.

"Even if the Russians came and offered to settle all the existing differences between us on a satisfactory basis," the President said, "I should still feel that the policies of Turkey must go hand in hand with those of the United States. Your country is the stabilizing force in the world, and Turkey needs a world which is at peace, a world in which we can feel secure. We have not known security for a long time."

The talk turned to Turkish internal politics. The President leaned forward, spoke very earnestly.

"Turkey must become a democracy," he said. "We have the framework, the foundation of democracy now, but we do not have the real substance of it yet. With me the day of personal leadership in Turkey is over. We needed such leadership for a time. Now we must broaden the basis of government. More and more people must take a part of the responsibility. We must have parties and thresh out conflicts of interest and opinion in discussion and by trial and error, and make our decisions not in this palace but at the polls. I am

growing old. I would like to see this process firmly established before I go."

There could be no doubt of his sincerity. He meant exactly what he was saying. It was, to me, a dramatic realization.

Here was a tightly controlled, highly centralized one-party government (so well organized that first Mussolini and then Hitler had modeled their arrangements on those of Kemal Atatürk) deliberately relaxing the reins of power, deliberately using that power to create an opposition, to turn dictatorship and one-party control into democracy and balanced party government. This, if I knew anything of history, was statesmanship.

I said so, and the President smiled a little and seemed pleased. "I have done what I can," he said. "Now comes the time when the people of Turkey must rule themselves. Men come and go. Only the nation is immortal."

I rose presently to take my leave, and the President said kind words about America and the American press and hoped I would write of Turkey just as I found it. "We do not mind criticism, if it is fair and honest," he said. "It helps us. Good-by and come to see us soon again."

I rode back downtown with Kasim Gulek and he told me that by virtue of a new law, recently passed, the minister of finance was empowered in specific cases and by specific contracts to arrange for foreign enterprises to operate in Turkey "when the Turkish economy would be benefited thereby" without suffering the restrictions and drastic taxation ordinarily applied in such cases.

Later that afternoon I went to the embassy residence to call on Ambassador Wilson, and he too soon brought the talk around to economic matters. He was especially anxious about Turkey's allotment under the European Recovery Program, which was pretty small. The development of the coal deposits

on the north coast would, he said, require \$25,000,000, and another \$15,000,000 was needed for the further expansion of the road program and for the flood-control irrigation project in Cilicia. These, the ambassador said, were all sound investments.

"We mustn't let the Turks get the idea that we are interested in them only as soldiers, to hold back the Russians from our oil fields and our lines of communication through the Mediterranean," he told me very earnestly. "Such talk is being heard already, and it does us no good. Russian propaganda plays that tune day and night. We've got to show the Turks that we're interested in the welfare of the Turkish people, as well as the fighting qualities of the Turkish soldier."

I dined that night with General Hoag and his wife at Serge's. In the morning I flew back to Istanbul. Gus Werner, an American engineer employed in connection with the Greek-Turkish aid program, was on the plane, and we talked the whole way.

He told me that the coal project was perfectly sound, from the engineering viewpoint. "In fact," he said, "it's one of the best ways for Turkey to find a means of earning some dollars, by selling coal in areas where she can get dollar exchange. And Turkey needs dollars. Look at the road program. We appropriate five million to help build roads in Turkey. Of that sum, we spend three million five hundred thousand for a lot of expensive machinery. We send a group of high-powered planners over here—eighteen or twenty of 'em—and we help the Turks get up a real plan for their road system. This dollar payroll eats up most of the rest of the money. And now where are we? We're ready to go to work, and what is the first thing we need before we can put all this high-powered machinery out on the road and get it to work? Why, we need gasoline and oil—about a million dollars' worth for the coming year. Turkey hasn't any, and gasoline and oil are com-

modities which can be purchased in the world market only with dollars, which Turkey hasn't either. What's more, we need about twenty American road crews, of four men each, to show the Turks how to use this machinery and service it in practical day to day work. That means a dollar payroll for the next year of, say, another million dollars. I don't know why nobody thinks of these things in advance."

When we arrived at the Park Hotel in Istanbul, they had only one single room, but offered to give the two of us a suite if we'd take it together. We had a belated breakfast on the terrace, with the *Siboney* at anchor in the Bosphorus right below us. Werner said it was worth all his weary flight from Athens to Ankara and back just to sit there in the sunshine and eat breakfast with that view spread out before us. Later that day Lieutenant Colonel Ed Hagenah, of the Marine Corps, an old Washington friend who was now assistant naval attaché in Turkey, came over for cocktails, and I dined that night with Ed and the division commander and commanding officer from the *Siboney*—Captains Hall and Fraser, U.S.N.

We talked, of course, mostly of naval matters, and this is perhaps as good a place as any to give some details of Turkish naval affairs.

The main jobs of the Turkish Navy are the defense of the straits, as a water barrier against the invasion of Anatolia from Europe, and the defense of the Black Sea coast against an amphibious attack. The Mediterranean can safely—and better—be left to the United States and British. For its two main jobs, the Turkish Navy needs the most effective weapons which it can get for limited funds. These are certainly submarines and mincraft, plus motor torpedo boats for offshore work. Its largest effective ships are destroyers, of which it has eight. There are fourteen submarines altogether, of which four are large modern ones recently transferred from the U. S. Navy. These ships were delivered to Turkey at Izmir just a

few days after I left the country. They had been brought from Norfolk by U.S. crews, though each had had on board eight Turkish officers and men under instruction. U.S. instructors will carry on the work of teaching the new Turkish crews how to run the ships.

It is rather interesting to note how little the language barrier really counts. You'd imagine that for an American chief electrician's mate, for example, speaking nothing but his native Texas drawl, to explain the intricacies of a submarine's switchboard to a group of Turkish sailors who speak only their native Turkish, would be no simple matter. But as a matter of fact, Turkish is a language rather poor in technical phraseology, so that it has been necessary to adopt many English words for purposes of naval instruction. Further, the Turkish sailors are being taught elementary English as part of their regular training. Finally, there is the wonderful knack of the American sailor for picking up enough bits and pieces of the language of the places he visits to enable him to be understood. In practice, therefore, the instruction proceeds very well. Many Turkish officers and men have been sent to the United States for training, including the crews of eight minesweepers and three auxiliary craft which have recently been transferred to the Turkish fleet.

The presence of the *Siboney* at Istanbul marked one small segment of the really great effort which is being made to build up the Turkish Air Force. This will involve, when completed, an operating tactical air force of some 600 fighters and fighter bombers, together with reconnaissance and transport planes. The training of Turkish pilots is proceeding satisfactorily. That of mechanics is not progressing quite so well, due principally to the fact that Turkey, a nonindustrial nation, does not have a great reservoir of mechanical skills and aptitudes. "I wish," said one of our naval aviators, "that we

could give every Turkish kid a Meccano set at the age of six. We'd have a foundation to build on then."

Celal Bey came to see me in the morning. Among other matters, he told me that a Bulgarian lieutenant colonel, of the technical branch of the Bulgarian Air Force, had just landed at Istanbul airport. It seems that this officer, according to his story, had been sent up as observer in a test flight of a Bulgarian plane operating from the airdrome at Plovdiv. When the plane was in the air, he put a pistol to the pilot's head and ordered him to fly to Istanbul. Later on, in the bar of the Park Hotel, I was introduced to the Bulgarian consul, Mr. Dimitri. "Glad to meet you, Mr. Consul," I said. "I must congratulate you on the smooth operation of the Bulgarian Mission for Aid to Turkey. I hear you delivered another airplane today." The consul laughed as heartily as everyone else.

I had a long talk with Huntington Damon that day. As I've already mentioned, he runs the U.S. Information Service in Istanbul. He talked to me at length and with enthusiasm about the democratization of Turkey.

"It isn't complete yet, by a long way," he said, "but I haven't the least doubt that Inonu and those close to him are convinced that democracy is the only safe road toward a secure Turkish future, and that they are moving along that road as fast as they think is safe. They're keeping a few little bridges open so that they can run back to dictatorial government if they think they have to, but these bridges are growing fewer in number, and the longer they leave them unused the more difficult it will be to use them. Take the matter of the press. There's only one daily paper in Turkey today which whole-heartedly and unreservedly supports the government at every point. The others range from occasional criticism to violent, unrestrained opposition. Nobody bothers them. That's a big change. In 1944, no newspaper could cri-

timize a minister, much less the policies of the government, without being shut down right away. American influence has played its part in this, too. When Wilbur Forrest, of the *New York Herald Tribune*, was here on his world tour as President of the American Society of Newspaper Editors, he had a talk with Shukri Saracoglu, then foreign minister, who sounded off about Turkish press freedom. 'But I hear that three papers have recently been suppressed in Istanbul under martial law,' Forrest said mildly. 'How about that?' Saracoglu stalled around, but a month later the papers resumed and martial law hasn't been used to close a Turkish newspaper since then. Yet the government has refused to sanction the outright repeal of certain sections of the press law under which they could, theoretically, suspend any newspaper on the ground that its policies endangered the public safety. The law exists but isn't used. That's what I mean by keeping a bridge open, here and there."

"What about the opposition party?" I asked.

"The Democratic Party appears to be a real opposition," he told me. "In '29 and again in '33, under Atatürk, there was much tootling about the coming into existence of an opposition party, but it got out of hand both times and was promptly suppressed when the big boys found they didn't like the way it acted. This party is different. It started in 1946 and has real support in the country. It's been permitted to develop its ideas and take issue with the government without serious interference. The leader of the opposition, Celal Bayer, is hardly a great man, certainly not of the caliber of a national chieftain such as Atatürk or Inonu, but he is capable, cautious and on the whole effective. In fact, Bayer is so careful that there is a left-wing element in his own party which threatens to split off and form a more vigorously critical party, demanding all kinds of immediate reforms. Theoretically, the government still has powers which could be used to suppress these

opposition parties. More bridges. But practically, as with the press law, the more they permit the habits of freedom to be acquired, the more difficult it becomes to take freedom away again. Inonu knows that. He's no fool. He's deliberately playing the game that way."

"How do the Turks really feel about American aid and American influence in Turkey?" I asked.

"Most of the jealousy and suspicion that was encountered at first, particularly from old-timers, has faded out," Damon said. "But a lot of cynicism still remains. The Turk has learned by bitter experience to judge foreign nations by deeds, not words."

I waved a hand toward the *Siboney*, at anchor out below us.

"The deeds are coming along," I said.

"Yes," said Damon, "and they're all right as far as they go. On the basis of our military help, we rate high—but not as high as we did. I think we hit the peak of our popularity last December. Since then we've been going down a little."

"Why?"

"Two things happened since then," Damon told me, "which have made some Turks say that we just use them as mercenaries to fight the Russians for us, that we care nothing for the Turkish people. One is the comparatively low allotment of funds for Turkey under the Marshall Plan. They can't see why Turkey, right here on the front line facing the Russian guns, shouldn't get a better allowance of help than Switzerland or Portugal. They blame us for it. The other thing is the tobacco deal. Tobacco is one export crop which the Turks can cash in on—if they can find a market. Two thirds of Turkey's tobacco exports used to go to Germany. That market has been cut off for some time. Now we've made a deal to take five million pounds of Turkish tobacco for the bizonal area of western Germany, in exchange for German textiles and other goods which Turkey needs. The deal was



all agreed to, virtually signed, sealed and delivered at the negotiating level. But when it went up to General Clay for ratification, Clay cut it down to less than half the original amount. There are two reasons given: one that prior contracts with American tobacco firms made it impossible for Germany to absorb so much Turkish tobacco, the other that Germany couldn't make delivery of the full amount of textiles. Anyway, it griped the Turks like hell. The papers were full of it for days, especially the opposition press, and of course the Russians have been going to town with it, charging that Turkish tobacco farmers were cynically sold out to favor American tobacco monopolists."

"Maybe that isn't so far wrong as most Russian propaganda," I remarked.

"When the ambassador was down at Bursa the other day," Damon told me, "in the heart of the tobacco district, a ragged Turkish peasant—seeing the American flag flying—came up to his car and said to him: 'My wife and children are hungry. If America had kept her word, they would have food.' Maybe that wasn't strictly true, but the important thing is, that simple folks like that peasant may believe it to be true."

"We would have done well to buy that tobacco anyway, American contracts or no American contracts," I said. "It's a matter of policy. We haven't learned yet how to do these things; we don't have a clearly balanced scale of values."

"That's right," said Damon. "But it's not too late. We've got a good start here in Turkey, and a magnificent opportunity to make these people into firm and confident friends of the United States. I believe we can do it. The Turks know they need help, of exactly the kind we can give them. They need education, they need industry, they need capital. We can help along all these lines, as well as in military security, which must in the end be based on a sound Turkish economy anyway. We can do all this and still win and keep their trust

—if we go at it right. If we do, we will stabilize the whole Middle East. If we don't, we've had it. If we can't succeed in Turkey, with the start we've got, the Turks will turn for help to somebody else—not Russia, but maybe a recovering Britain or France or maybe even a resurgent Germany. And if we don't make good in Turkey we won't succeed anywhere else in the Middle East, either.”

## Trieste

*May 20-25, 1948*

I WAS supposed to leave for Rome by the British plane late that afternoon. I discovered that the plane stopped overnight in Athens, and, having had some experience of the delays imposed on "transit" passengers without visas, who are quite likely to be herded about like highly suspicious characters, I got Damon to send my passport round to the Greek consulate to get myself a new Greek visa. Then I fired a wire to Betty McCluer, asking her to have some mission transportation for me at the Athens airport. Betty showed up at the airport in person, tall, blonde and beautiful, with a mission station wagon. I was comfortably checked in at the Grande Bretagne and we were having a couple of nice cold Collinses in the bar when the busload of transit passengers arrived, hot and unhappy from a long wait at the field.

No one in Athens seemed to know very much about how poor George Polk had met his death. All kinds of rumors were flying around. It seemed pretty clear that George had made a contact with the Markos outfit, and had—or thought he had—arranged for an interview with Markos. He had started out in a boat from Salonika, or somewhere near Salonika, on the first stage of his journey. Most of the stories agreed that far. As to what happened after that, you could hear a dozen versions. The Communists had deliberately baited a trap for him and murdered him. The right-wing Royalists had bumped him off to keep him from seeing Markos. The Communists were splitting up; one faction thought

Markos was weakening, and had killed George to prevent this news from getting out through him. The boat had gone to the rendezvous, but failed to make contact, and the crew had become suspicious of George and decided to kill him to be on the safe side. Hell, you could hear anything. C.B.S. had sent Winston Burdette over from Rome to help with the investigation; he was up in Salonika, so I didn't see him. The Greek police were supposed to be hard at work, and the mission had assigned people to work with them and keep them sparking.

But though I didn't find out anything about the Polk murder, it turned out fortunately from another angle that I'd got that Greek visa. I hadn't been in Athens very long when I realized that something big was brewing on the military side of the picture. There was an undercurrent of tension which was pretty apparent. It could only be the approach of the big summer offensive in the Grammos area. General Van Fleet was out of town, but his deputy, Major General Harper, said if I could stay over a day he'd see that I was thoroughly briefed on the situation as it then existed. I managed to arrange the stopover with the British air line.

Next day I was notified that an expense draft for five hundred dollars, which I'd asked to be sent either to Athens or Rome, was waiting for me at the Bank of Greece. I went around there to get the money, and it took me exactly one hour and forty-five minutes to extract it from them. Every dollar of American exchange is precious to the Greek Government, and they don't like to part with it.

The first man I went to said, "Oh, yes. We have the draft here. Five hundred dollars. You want it in drachmas, I suppose?"

"No," I said firmly. "I want it in dollars."

"In dollars?" he said, looking pained.

"In dollars," I reiterated.

He sent me to another man in another office. The conver-

sation was repeated. Papers were added to the file, with stamps on them. I must now see Mr. Poppalopalos, or something like that. Same conversation.

Now I must go to see Mr. So-and-so, down on the second floor, at a small desk in the midst of a huge overcrowded office.

"Drachmas, of course?"

"No, dollars."

"Dollars?" in a despairing wail.

"Dollars."

"Oh, for that, you must go to the third floor and see the director."

More papers. More stamps. The director was a nice little fat man, and very polite. "You'll be wanting this in drachmas, Mr. Eliot?"

"No, thank you, Mr. Director, since I am leaving Greece tomorrow I shall require dollars."

"Oh. Dollars."

A bang of the stamp, a reluctant signature, but a nice polite smile just the same, faintly reproachful. Then a long wait at a counter, while all these papers were passed from hand to hand by several clerks, entries made in half a dozen books, a girl messenger sent scooting off with all the papers to get something fixed that had been done wrong. Finally it was done—the last paper correct and approved, the last stamp affixed. I was directed to the cashier's window. I stood patiently for about fifteen minutes, while an unhappy plumpish Greek woman tried to induce the cashier to give her good Greek money for bad French francs of a withdrawn issue. There was much shouting, fist banging and waving of hands. At long last she gave up, and I was actually at the cashier's window, on the last lap of my Odyssey. Triumphant I shoved the papers through the grille.

The cashier, a long, lanky, cadaverous individual with a

face like a sad old horse, leafed through the whole sheaf of papers very carefully. He summoned a bespectacled young man, who also leafed through them one by one. They both kept glancing at me suspiciously as they muttered over each separate item.

"But this," said the cashier, at last, "calls for five hundred dollars in United States funds." His manner said, this is unheard of. Incredible.

"That's right," I agreed.

"Of course," said the cashier, "you want this in drachmas."

"No, goddammit," I yelled. "I want it in dollars, and I want it right now!"

I got it. But he counted it out to me as though each separate greenback had a drop of his heart's blood on it.

That afternoon, in the map room at J.U.S.M.A.P. headquarters, I was very thoroughly and competently briefed on the military situation by General Harper, Colonel Claybrook and Lieutenant Colonel Blanchard of the operations staff. I was told nothing, in so many words, about future plans. But I was able to draw my own conclusions from the position of the troop units and from the bandit movements. It was clear that the bandits were concentrating for a big fight in the Grammos area, and that the Greek Army was closing in upon them for an operation box of proportions such as had never been attempted heretofore.

This was to be a decisive battle. If the ten-thousand-odd guerrillas who were grouping in the rocky defiles of Grammos and adjacent mountains were killed, captured or driven in headlong flight across the Albanian frontier, the "Free Democratic Government of Greece" would never recover from the blow. Organized guerrilla warfare in Greece would be over. Only mopping up would remain. I was told clearly just what items of the information given me were "off the record," and I was asked not to publish any conclusions I might reach

about future plans until such time as these plans were obviously being put into action. The hour I spent in the map room was invaluable to me later on when the big battle began to develop, and I was able to explain its origin and meaning to my readers.

I flew on to Rome in the morning, passing over the Corinth Canal en route and noting the progress being made in clearing the canal of the vast earth slides created by German blasting. It is hoped that the canal will be open by the middle of August.

Rome was still thickly plastered with political posters from the recent election, in which the Communists had been so soundly licked. As I intended to return to Rome later, and was leaving for Trieste next day, I did not try to arrange any interviews. I called at the embassy, got some mail from home, and asked the acting military attaché, Colonel Glawe, to telephone the commanding general at Trieste to say that I was flying up there the next day and hoped to have a chance to talk with him.

In Athens I'd picked up a message from Vice-Admiral Sherman that his flagship, the heavy cruiser *Rochester*, would be in Trieste May 18 to 22, and in Venice May 23 to 25. This was the twenty-first. I could not reach Trieste in time to see the admiral there, but I figured I would catch him in Venice, after visiting Trieste.

Coming out of the embassy, I met Quentin Reynolds and his wife, Virginia. They asked me to dine with them at Alfredo's, but I couldn't make it. I had a story to get on the wire, and I anticipated the usual trouble about "press collect" credentials. In this, as it turned out, I was happily disappointed—everything was smooth as butter.

Next day I picked up my pass authorizing me to enter the Free Territory of Trieste, and in the afternoon caught an Italian air liner, which put me down at Gorizia, on the

Italian-Yugoslav frontier just north of the Free Territory. (There is no regular airfield in the F.T.T.) Major Shannon, public-relations officer on the staff of the commanding general, U.S. Troops, Trieste (TRUST) met me at Gorizia airport with a staff car. The peace treaty had left the bulk of Gorizia in Italy, but part of the town, including the waterworks, was given to Yugoslavia.

Shannon drove me down to the frontier, where Italian police of the *Sicurezza Nazionale* guarded the barrier—a long hinged pole straight across the road—while fifty yards away Yugoslav soldiers in faded khaki uniforms guarded a similar barrier, close to a railroad underpass. This was the Iron Curtain. I had not seen any part of that famous frontier between two worlds since Vienna in '46. As I watched, the Yugoslav barrier was raised to allow a barefooted old woman driving an oxcart to pass into Italy. She came up to the Italian barrier, and the guards waved her through without bothering to look at her papers. Evidently they knew her.

"The countryside go back and forth like that all the time now," Shannon told me. "At first the Jugs were very stiff about it. They wouldn't let anybody by. A lot of people were caught visiting or attending to business on the far side of the frontier, and some of 'em couldn't get home for days. Families were separated. People who worked on one side of the new frontier and lived on the other were just out of luck. The peasants couldn't bring their produce to market, or get into Gorizia to buy supplies. But people must live, and even the Jugs have come to realize that. The pressures set up by human necessity just can't be resisted by arbitrary police rules, because those pressures never cease, and they grow stronger the longer they're held back. So now it's better, like that—"

He jerked his thumb toward the passing oxcart and its patient, plodding driver.

"It was right there at that barrier," Shannon went on, "that



we had one of our little arguments with the Jugs, the day the Jugs moved up from the Morgan line to the new treaty frontier. Almost everywhere they tried to push their occupation a little farther than the law allowed. They wanted to gain a hundred yards at one place, five hundred at another. And they pulled a fast one on us."

"How was that?" I asked.

"Well, we had an agreement all worked out with them by which the withdrawal of the United States and British troops all along the line would take place at ten A.M. on the appointed day. All the arrangements had been made. Then suddenly, at nine the night before, the Jugs informed us that they were moving up at midnight. Their idea was that we'd be caught off balance, and that in the morning a lot of American and British soldiers would be behind the Yugoslav lines. Then they'd make all kinds of claims about incidents and stuff and stuff, and what's more they'd be able to push right up to the places they wanted to go and we'd never get 'em out. They'd have a lot of Yanks and Tommies as hostages, for one thing. Heaven only knows when we would have got those boys back. Of course they thought we could never meet this surprise move in time. They kind of underestimated our communications and our staff efficiency. We only had three hours, but three hours were enough. When the Jugs moved up at midnight, all the American and British troops had been pulled back to the new line, and at every point along the frontier they ran into our detachments standing right on the line where we belonged. They were certainly surprised, and some of 'em were inclined to be ugly."

He pointed to a street a block to our rear.

"That was where they wanted to fix their front at this point," he told me. "That would have given 'em that big hospital over there, the railroad station and I think the power plant. We had a lieutenant at the barrier there with a pla-

toon. The Jugs had a battalion. The battalion commander said he was going through. Our lieutenant said no. The Jugs brought up two tanks. Our lieutenant let them look at a couple of bazookas. The Jugs said we had twenty minutes to fall back. Our lieutenant said we weren't falling back in twenty minutes, or at all. The Jug colonel said he'd give him another half hour to make up his mind. Our lieutenant said his mind was already made up, and had been all along. By this time the Jug colonel was looking a little ridiculous even to his own men. And by this time we had a couple of our own tanks standing right about where we are now. The Jugs gave up. It was the same all along the front."

We got back into the car, and drove south, close to the frontier, until we passed the big Italian shipyards in Monfalcone and came presently to the guard post at the northern border of the Free Territory. Here we had to show our papers first to the Italian police, and then to the Venezia Giulia police a few yards farther along. The Venezia Giulia police are the internal security force of the Free Territory, recruited from the local population and trained by British and American officers. They are about six thousand strong, and very smart and efficient. They now man all road blocks on the borders of the Free Territory, relieving the Allied troops of this duty and enabling the latter to spend their time in training. We had no trouble at either barrier and presently were rolling along the beautiful road which clings to the rocky cliffside above the waters of the Gulf of Trieste all the way from the frontier into the city.

Trieste, geographically, isn't a proper item to be included in a report on the Middle East. But from the strategic point of view, it is a point of pressure and of contact between those two worlds—the Western world and the Soviet world—whose inherent rivalry makes the Middle East an area of vital interest to all of us today and may make it a cockpit of battle tomorrow.

row. The fight may be touched off at Trieste as well as at Kars or Tabriz or Salonika. And Trieste is a window on Yugoslavia, which reaches south to the frontier of Greece and eastward toward Turkey. Trieste is the western outpost along that long southern flank of the Soviet empire, the flank which runs through the Greek mountains and past Adrianople and through the Black Sea to Transcaucasia and Kurdistan, and so to the Caspian, the desert of Khurasan and at last to the Hindu Kush and the Pamirs. Trieste is more than that: it is the link between the Mediterranean-Middle Eastern area of the "cold war" and the Austrian-German area.

At present Trieste is, politically at any rate, in a state of what might well be called suspended animation. The "Free Territory" is a creature of the Paris peace conference of 1946. It represents a compromise between Italian and Yugoslav claims to the possession of the city and of the adjacent area, called usually Venezia Giulia. The Free Territory is, under the statute which forms an annex to the Italian peace treaty, to be occupied by American, British and Yugoslav troops—5,000 of each—until the Big Four have agreed on the appointment of a governor and the latter has taken over and says he doesn't need the troops any more. But since it has been impossible to find a governor who is acceptable to the Americans, British and French on the one hand, and the Soviet Union on the other, the Free Territory remains in practice under the administration and control of the military commanders of the occupying forces. As a practical matter the northern part of the Free Territory, including the city of Trieste itself, is the only part which deserves to be called "Free." This is the part under American and British occupation. The southern part, occupied by the Yugoslavs, and known to our troops as "Lower Slobbovia," has to all intents and purposes and entirely in violation of the statute, been incorporated into Yugoslavia. The line of division between the

two occupying forces within the Free Territory is just as rigidly controlled as the eastern frontier where the Anglo-American zone of occupation adjoins the territory of Yugoslavia proper.

We drove past Duino Castle, the residence of Major General Terence Sydney Airey, commanding the British troops and by virtue of seniority the boss of the joint administration of the Free Territory. Then, far ahead, Major Shannon pointed out another castle, not on a height like Duino but down on the shore.

"That's Miramar," he said. "That's where you're going."

Miramar Castle was built by the Archduke Maximilian, once Emperor of Mexico, for his lovely wife Carlotta in those happier days before he thought of empire beyond the seas. It has not been a fortunate possession for those who have owned it. Long after Maximilian fell before a Mexican firing squad at Querétaro, it was the home of the Duke of Aosta, who died of wounds received in Ethiopia during the late war. Today it is the residence and command post of the commanding general, U.S. Troops, Trieste—a destiny which Maximilian could hardly have imagined for it in his wildest dreams.

Major General Bryant E. Moore, U.S.A., has fortunately escaped the curse which seems to have fallen on former occupants of Miramar; at any rate he has since returned to the United States to take charge of the Public Relations Division of the Department of the Army, though there are those who would think this assignment scarcely preferable to being stood against a wall. Behind him lies a splendid record as the war-time commander of the 88th Division. Not the least of his claim to high regard is his long and arduous service in command of that unit facing the Yugoslavs along the famous "Morgan Line" during the trying days when the whole of Venezia Giulia was in dispute between Yugoslavia and Italy, and later in command of our troops in Trieste. It is difficult

for people living quietly at home here in the United States to realize the tremendous strain and constant vigilance both over material affairs and over one's own feelings required of an officer in such a position. General Moore well earned the grateful appreciation of all of us, both for firmness when it was needed and for never-failing patience in the discharge of a most trying duty.

Incidentally he built up a fine command. When I was in Germany and Austria in '46 it was the common talk of American officers in Europe that one had not seen American soldiers until one had seen the 88th Division. Today the U.S. Troops, Trieste, are the pick of that division, and they carry on its magnificent tradition and spirit. The force is not a large one—5,000 all told—one infantry regiment (the 351st), a tank company, an engineer company and the necessary services. It is a major study in administration and command to keep the maximum number of men available for combat duty as against the constant drain of the demands of the administrative and supply services. Every American soldier in Trieste is trained for combat duties if required, whether he belongs to the Quartermaster Corps, the Signal Corps, the Ordnance Department, or is really in an infantry rifle company.

When I came up to the fine old entrance of Miramar Castle, General Moore's aide was waiting to receive me, and we found the general and Mrs. Moore on the beautiful terrace of his private quarters, overlooking the harbor of Trieste. Far across the water, the low hills of the Istrian shore—under Yugoslav occupation—were visible. We had cocktails on the terrace, and went in to dinner in a room where kings and emperors had dined in times gone by. Later, I talked with the general well into the night.

The difficulties of the Trieste command are numerous, and none of them is to be dealt with by any simple formula. The

command of the American and British forces of occupation, and the administration of that part of the Free Territory which they occupy, is handled as a combined operation under the general direction of the combined chiefs of staff—the only C.C.S. responsibility in the whole Mediterranean area at present. The long delay in choosing a governor has caused the American, British and French governments to recommend that the Free Territory be turned over to Italy, but no one can guess when this will happen, if ever, since it requires a revision of the peace treaty to which Soviet assent must be obtained.

The population of the city of Trieste is about seventy per cent Italian, most of the rest being Slovene (Yugoslav). The population of the hinterland around Trieste is about thirty per cent Italian and seventy per cent Slovene—just the reverse. No one can deny that Trieste is an Italian city. Nor can anyone deny that its only economic reason for existence is to act as a port and market place for a hinterland which is inhabited by peoples who are not Italian: Yugoslavs, Austrians, Hungarians and Czechoslovaks. This is the basic riddle and paradox of Trieste. Italian patriots cry with justice that Trieste belongs to Italy because of the nationality of the vast majority of its inhabitants. Yugoslav economists cry with equal justice that Trieste is a seaport essential to the economic well-being of Yugoslavia and has little economic importance for Italy.

The idea of making Trieste a Free Territory was supposed to solve the riddle by establishing at Trieste an internationalized port which could serve all central and southeastern Europe, but be under the sovereignty of no one country. But the Yugoslavs wouldn't play. If they couldn't have Trieste, they wouldn't use Trieste. They routed their shipping business to their own ports, such as Fiume, though they don't own a port anywhere nearly so well equipped as Trieste, which is, indeed, the best-equipped port on the whole Mediterranean

with the possible exception of Marseille. Trieste, under any other flag, might wither on the vine as far as the Jugs were concerned.

For a time it showed some signs of doing just that. Now things are picking up a little, with some trade coming from Austria and with E.R.P. business for Austria routed through Trieste. But it will not be the old busy, happy, wealthy Trieste of the days when it was the port of the Austro-Hungarian empire—which meant of the whole Danube Valley—until it is restored to that natural trade which belongs to it by every law of convenience and position, but is denied to it by the clash of politics. The comfort of the Triestinos is to reflect that in the end natural needs do generally prevail over artificial political restrictions, as Major Shannon remarked about the oxcart. But meanwhile the waiting time provides pretty lean pickings.

General Moore told me that there had been very few incidents along the frontier of late. The Jugs were being unusually quiet. He didn't know why—and neither did I, then, though it's plain enough now that Belgrade was having troubles of its own.

I slept that night in what had been a state bedroom in Maximilian's days, with twelve straight-backed chairs ranged round the walls, each with a different quartering of the Habsburg arms on its red plush seat, and not a really comfortable chair in the room. I went to sleep to the wash of the Adriatic waves against the sea wall—waves of an arm of that same Mediterranean which had lulled me to sleep in Tel Aviv and in Beirut, places which seemed very far away indeed from Trieste, and tormented by quite different anxieties.

In the morning I sat and sunned myself on the terrace. The general and Mrs. Moore went to church. The chief of staff, Colonel Molitor, and his wife came by and kept me com-

pany for a time. He is a fine, hard-boiled soldier with a keen mind.

That afternoon, I went with the general and Mrs. Moore to the horse show at Udine, headquarters of the Italian Army command covering the Yugoslav frontier. We were the guests of General di Montezamulo, the Italian division commander. The horse show was chiefly obstacle riding by American, French, British and Italian officers and enlisted men, with a sprinkling of civilians, including a couple of American girls and a lot of Italian gentlemen in pink coats, and several entries from the Venezia Giulia police. A British sergeant turned in the only perfect ride, and an inspector of the V.G. police was badly hurt when his horse tossed him into the last hurdle. Afterward we drove along the frontier from Cividale down to Trieste, to have a look at the terrain.

In general the Yugoslavs hold the high ground and the Italians face them in the plain. The only possible defense would be a mobile defense, with armor and motorized infantry held well back to strike when opportunity might offer. But armor and motorized infantry are just what the Italians are fresh out of, being sadly restricted both by budgetary deficiencies and the artificial armament restrictions of the peace treaty, so that the Italian Army numbers less than half of that of Yugoslavia, though Italy has three times Yugoslavia's population.

At one point we drove within fifty yards of the frontier line, which was marked by a row of white sticks planted in an open field. But don't think it wasn't guarded. The general pointed out a rough observation tower built of poles with the bark still on them, in which two Yugoslav soldiers were perched with rifles ready.

In the morning I made a tour of the front line with Colonel Molitor. We went first to an observation post overlooking



one of the main road blocks. I was immediately struck by the almost incredibly smart appearance of the officers and men of the 351st Infantry. This regiment is an example of what American regular troops can be like at their very best. Whether on duty or on pass in the town, its people look as though they had just come from an inspection by a highly particular general officer.

The O.P. was on top of a hill, approached by a camouflaged path. It was connected by telephone with regimental headquarters and commanded a view not only of the road block but of a considerable stretch of Yugoslav territory. Trieste itself lies down on the shore line for the most part. Behind it the hills rise very steeply, and the first line of these hills is held by the Allied troops—Americans to the north, British to the south. A direct advance on the city from north or east would not be easy. To the south the country is more open. From the O.P. we could see a big new Yugoslav flag at the road block and a train, in Yugoslav territory, lying in the railroad station. The lieutenant in charge said there wasn't much going on, not even the usual amount of traffic on the road.

We went then to another O.P. in the British sector. From here we could see the open valley leading down into "Lower Slobbovia," and had a truly magnificent view of the harbor with its docks and basins.

Colonel Molitor pointed out the light cruiser *Dayton* lying alongside her pier, together with a British sloop. They looked like toy boats so far below us.

"It's those ships that worry the Jugs as much as anything," he said. "They pop up over the horizon in ones or twos or threes—the Jugs never know when, nor where they come from. They stay three days—five days—a week. They go away, and others come. They make the Jugs nervous. They're a symbol of power which they can't disregard—the long arm of

Uncle Sam. I've no doubt the Jugs think we have thousands of them."

From this O.P. we went to visit the 1st Battalion of the 351st Infantry. The companies of the battalion were at drill on the parade ground. The quarters, dayrooms, mess halls and kitchens were what you would expect of a Number One regiment. A few men were asleep in their bunks. They were the men who had been out on jeep patrol the night before; these patrols are constant over the whole front-line area.

Finally we made a tour of the harbor front in a fast patrol boat. In one part of the harbor were several wrecked and abandoned ships—victims of bombs or demolition charges. They were being broken up for scrap and the scrap was being carried in barges to the steel mill, which was thus kept busily at work turning out steel with which to build new ships. By this means Trieste's shipbuilding industry is being partially revived. Two little cruisers, built for the Siamese Government by the Trieste yards and sunk during the war, had been raised and were afloat, one near the wrecked ships, the other alongside a pier farther up the harbor. Probably neither of them will ever see Siam.

In the afternoon I called on General Airey, the British general at the head of the Trieste administration—a bluff, hearty man with a keen idea of his job and a sense of anxious responsibility for the people under his control. He was quite pleased over having prevented any riotous Communist demonstrations on May Day. He had simply shut off all entry to the city, except for people on clearly established and legitimate business, for five days preceding that time, so that the Jugs could not, as they had done on previous May Days, put in thousands of outsiders to raise hell in Trieste. There was a great outcry about "inhuman tyranny" and "crushing the spirit of the people under the iron heels of capitalist mercenaries"—but there weren't any riots.

My next call was on Brigadier General Gaither, the American officer who is, in effect, the civil governor of the city. He was much upset over a matter currently before him, involving a ship which had been sold for scrapping, but which the purchaser had found to be seaworthy, with some reasonable repair work, and wanted to fix up and operate. This ship would be a lot of help to the revival of Trieste's trade, and Gaither was all in favor of granting the required permission. So was everyone else in the Trieste administration. But some hide-bound individual in the Maritime Commission in Washington had turned thumbs down on the proposition. The ship was supposed to be scrapped, so scrapped it must be, said the Maritime Commission, five thousand miles away. Never mind the loss involved in turning a million-dollar investment into a few thousand dollars' worth of scrap. Never mind the urgent need of Trieste for more shipping, more trade. It says here, Scrap that ship. What's the matter, can't you read?

I thought maybe I could even read between the lines and see some trace of American shipping interests, always well built-in with the Maritime Commission, saying something about foreign-flag competition with American shipowners. It seemed just another case of a lack of a sense of values, lack of a balanced national policy taking precedence of private interests, like the Turkish tobacco deal.

That evening I dined with Bob Joyce, political representative for the State Department at Trieste. I had last seen him in Belgrade in '39, when he was first secretary of our legation there. He is a great expert on the Balkans, particularly on Yugoslavia, which is probably why the State Department sent him to Havana shortly after the outbreak of the war. Then he left the Foreign Service temporarily and had a distinguished war record. Now he was back in the area where his experience best fitted him to serve.

He told me that after the first flush of patriotic enthusiasm

over the announcement that the Western allies favored the return of Trieste to Italy, there had been signs of a certain amount of sober second thought among some Triestinos, especially the business community. Wouldn't it be better, some of these were saying, if the United States and Britain stayed in Trieste for a while and developed the place as a port, if not for Yugoslavia, then at least for Austria? The return to Italian sovereignty might well involve bearing a grim share in Italy's long struggle for recovery from the effects of the war. It is interesting to note that Trieste has been made the port for handling Marshall Plan shipments to Austria, and now is to have its own share in Marshall Plan benefits. If in the course of Tito's struggle with the Kremlin, the Yugoslav marshal finds himself compelled to seek new economic orientations, perhaps some Yugoslav trade may flow through Trieste as well—though there were few in Trieste when I was there who would have anticipated such a development. If things turn in that direction, one may well guess that some shrewd Triestinos will say, "To be a free city and run our own affairs is not too bad after all, and the Americans and British give us freer scope than would be possible under Italy, who would tax our recovering prosperity and choke it in the cradle."

On this point there is one more consideration of a strategic nature which I heard mentioned afterward in Rome. Trieste, under Anglo-American occupation, stands on the flank of any Yugoslav thrust into northern Italy. Through Trieste, if it could be held, our power could flow from the sea to check and smother such an adventure. Most Italians want Trieste to return to Italy. Our proposal that this be accomplished was a shrewd political move which had great weight in the Italian elections, since the Russians felt compelled to oppose it despite the furious remonstrances of the Italian Communists. I have no doubt that this proposal was a perfectly sincere one. But it is interesting to note not only that some

Triestinos have their doubts about it, as an economic proposition, but also that, on military grounds, it is not wholeheartedly indorsed by some officers of the Italian General Staff.

Early the next morning after my dinner with Bob Joyce I took my leave of my kind hosts General and Mrs. Moore and was driven to the little steel-mesh air strip high on the crest above the city. Here a small two-seater L-5 airplane was waiting to fly me to Venice for my visit with the commander of our Mediterranean Fleet.

## U. S. Naval Forces, Mediterranean

*May 25-26, 1948*

THE L-5 came down at Lido airfield in a blaze of bright Venetian sunshine. At the dock the admiral's barge\* was waiting, and we shoved off immediately, heading for the Grand Canal.

I had never been in Venice before. Little did I think, when as a boy I breathlessly read G. A. Henty's *The Lion of St. Mark* that I should first enter the Grand Canal in the barge of the admiral commanding the United States Mediterranean Fleet. Yet so it had turned out.

The *Rochester*, a heavy cruiser of some seventeen thousand tons—bigger than any battleship of the U.S. Navy when I'd read that book of Henty's—was lying in the canal directly opposite the famous Piazza San Marco. She looked very big and gray and formidable—and *good*. The barge came alongside, I mounted the ladder, tipped my hat to the colors and to the officer of the deck, and here came my good friend Vice-Admiral Forrest Sherman to welcome me aboard his flagship.

We went down to his cabin and talked awhile, and then we had lunch with real American biscuits and apple pie.

Afterward we looked at some maps and talked some more.

Somehow, from the flag cabin of the *Rochester*, I could suddenly see the "big picture" of our Mediterranean and Mid-

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\* The motor launch assigned for the personal use of a flag officer is known in Navy parlance as a "barge."

dle Eastern interests and activities more clearly, more as a whole, than I'd been able to do from any other place I'd visited. This was not altogether because in Venice one could take a more detached and dispassionate view of the troubles of Palestine or Greece or Iran than was possible on the spot. It was also because the navy is the only connecting link which ties together the scattered segments of Mediterranean policy.

Chiefs of military missions, military and naval attachés, ambassadors and ministers, must give their attention to the locality in which they are stationed, and to the job immediately in hand. The admiral commanding the Mediterranean Fleet never knows to what locality his primary attention may next be directed. He must think of the Mediterranean as a whole, which is, incidentally, the only way that a proper Mediterranean policy can be evolved and carried on.

The normal strength of our naval forces in the Mediterranean comprises one aircraft carrier (with an air group of ninety airplanes), three cruisers, nine destroyers, an attack transport, an oiler and a cargo ship. On board these vessels, in addition to their crews, there is a battalion of about a thousand Marines. Thus the force is one of balanced components, and can act with all of the three elements of naval power—air power, gunfire and amphibious power. As Sherman himself once said to me before he left the United States to hoist his flag in the Mediterranean, when you send a workman 'way out to the suburbs to repair a house, you'd better make sure he takes along a full kit of tools so he doesn't have to waste time coming back to the shop to get something he needs and doesn't have with him.

These ships are rarely all together in one area. At the time I arrived aboard the *Rochester* in Venice the distribution was as follows: cruiser *Dayton*, Trieste; cruiser *Manchester*, Athens; aircraft carrier *Philippine Sea*, Tripoli; two destroyers at Tripoli, two at Malta, five in Greek waters; oiler at Malta;

cargo ship, Athens; transport, en route from Rhodes to Malta.

The ships are periodically relieved by others from the Atlantic Fleet every four months. This gives all captains and crews of the Atlantic Fleet a chance to acquire Mediterranean experience, and makes reinforcement of the Mediterranean forces much easier in case of need.

The commander, U.S. Naval Forces, Mediterranean, is a subordinate of the commander in chief, U.S. Naval Forces, Europe and Mediterranean, with headquarters in London. This command was held by another good friend of mine, Admiral Richard L. Connolly, whom I saw afterward in London on my way home to the States.

The periodic relief, I found, was about to take place. The carrier *Kearsarge*, the cruisers *Fargo*, *Huntington* and *Juneau* and a new complement of destroyers and auxiliaries were already en route to the Mediterranean to carry out the relief. Originally, the relief was supposed to take place at Gibraltar, but it was decided by Admirals Connolly and Sherman that it should take place in Greek waters instead. In view of the existing tension in the eastern Mediterranean, where the Lebanese Government had just taken forty-one American citizens off the American steamer *Marine Carp* on the ground that they were recruits for the Israeli Army, and where Egypt and Syria had proclaimed a blockade of the Palestine coast which the United States had refused to recognize, it was considered that for the bulk of our naval forces to proceed to the western extreme of the Mediterranean would hardly be advisable.

This is just another example of the need for American naval officers on this explosive assignment to be constantly prepared to meet any emergency that may arise, and to try to guess if possible where the next emergency may make its appearance so that they will not be too far away if they are needed. Of course, with radio communications what they are today, far less is left to the initiative of the commander on the spot than



used to be the case when it took weeks to get orders from home. But the commander in the Mediterranean still has plenty of scope for the exercise of individual responsibility.

It was not a pleasant decision for Admiral Sherman, since he had hoped to meet his wife—who was visiting her daughter at Madrid—when his flagship reached Gibraltar.

It is an unfortunate fact that our various military enterprises in the Mediterranean and Middle Eastern area are not tied together as parts of a planned whole. The military, naval and air groups of the Greek and Turkish missions have no direct connection as between Athens and Ankara. The two military missions in Iran have no connection with the Turkish Mission, though the two countries are adjacent and strategically interdependent. The U.S. Troops, Trieste, operate under a directive of the combined chiefs of staff in Washington, as already remarked. The commanding officers of the U.S. Air Force bases at Tripoli (Libya) and Dhahran (Saudi Arabia) report to the Department of the Air Force in Washington. The commander, U.S. Naval Forces, Mediterranean, reports through the commander in chief in London to the Navy Department.

There is nothing which ties all these various activities together, yet it is as clear as daylight that at any moment an emergency might arise requiring joint action and a common command. Should we be faced with such an emergency to-day, we would, as so often in the past, have to depend on hasty improvisation and the issuance of orders from Washington by people who had but a hazy and perhaps completely erroneous idea of the actual situation.

It is also a disturbing fact—already commented on earlier in this book—that there is no plan of combined action for American and British forces, though should there be trouble with the Russians these forces would certainly act together.

One reason this has not been done before is the Palestine

trouble. Any proposal for Anglo-American military co-operation in the Middle East would have immediately resulted in serious criticism from those who sympathize with the Jewish cause, and might even have been interpreted as official American support for British policy in Palestine. As the divergence of viewpoint between the two governments on this question grew more acute, it became less and less possible to enter into military conversations with regard to the area of which Palestine is the very nerve center.

Now, however, the British have left Palestine and no longer have any special responsibility for that country. Moreover, it has become apparent that the two governments have reached an agreement, at least in principle, as to their future policy regarding Palestine and the establishment of the state of Israel. Under these conditions, the time is again propitious for considering a general Anglo-American military plan for the Mediterranean-Middle Eastern region as a whole.

The British have considerable ground forces in Cyprus and in the Suez Canal Zone in Egypt; they have garrisons at Malta and Gibraltar, and in the former Italian colonies; like ourselves, they have five thousand troops in Trieste, and a somewhat smaller number in Greece, chiefly at Salonika. They have air bases in Egypt, Transjordan, Cyprus, Malta, Gibraltar, Libya and Iraq. Their Mediterranean Fleet, based on Malta, includes two small aircraft carriers, four cruisers and sixteen destroyers.

Thus the actual British forces present in the area are considerably stronger than ours. On the other hand, our ability to reinforce our air and naval forces quickly is considerably greater than theirs, since our Atlantic Fleet is much stronger than the British Home Fleet, and our air forces at home are quite a lot stronger than the permanent establishment of the Royal Air Force in Great Britain. Our possession of "steppingstone" bases at Newfoundland and in the Azores gives

us a pipe line by which we can shift air power into the Mediterranean very rapidly, even when bad weather impedes the northern route via Greenland, Iceland, the British Isles and western Germany.

If ever there existed a military situation calling for combined planning in meticulous detail, it is this one.

It seems to me, and I found few American or British officers in the area who disagreed with me, that the first thing to do is for the two governments to instruct the combined chiefs of staff to work out in general principle an over-all plan for the combined use of the limited forces available to the two powers in the Mediterranean and Middle East in case of any of several conceivable emergency situations. Second, a commander in chief designate should be appointed, sent to the Mediterranean with a proper combined staff, American and British, army, navy and air, and instructed to make recommendations filling in the details of the plan. It would not matter whether this officer were an American or a Briton, or from what branch of the service he might be drawn, so that he were competent and able to command the respect and loyalty of all concerned, and so that everyone in the area knew that they would look to him for orders if "the balloon went up." The third step would be to bring the Turkish, Greek and Iranian general staffs into the picture, and to co-ordinate the whole structure of our common planning for the defense of this vital region of the world against Soviet expansion. Co-operation with the French and Italian general staffs, perhaps in connection with the new proposals for a defensive union of western Europe, might later be sought.

The mobility of our own fleet and its over-all responsibility in the Mediterranean as distinguished from the local responsibility of other activities, suggested to me that a proper headquarters for this commander in chief might be arranged by giving him one of our amphibious-force flagships, which are

simply big floating command posts, with ample high-power communications, rooms for staff conferences and plenty of cabin and office space. With such a ship he could move about from place to place and familiarize himself with every part of the area for which he might be responsible. Moreover, the political embarrassment of having such a headquarters on shore would be avoided, the headquarters being mobile would be less subject to sudden attack, and a cramped and localized point of view due to fixed location would not develop. The dispatch of the U.S.S. *Pocono*, an amphibious-force flagship, to the Mediterranean in July of this year may signify a desire on the part of the U.S. Government to explore the possibilities of the use of such a ship for the purpose above suggested. No ship of this type has previously been on the Mediterranean station since the close of the war.

I cannot sufficiently emphasize the importance to all our Mediterranean activities, and to the support of our policies in that area, of the presence there of a strong, balanced, American naval force. It makes all the difference in the world to American troops or military missions ashore to have the grim powerful ships of the U.S. Navy coming in to call on them occasionally. Not only does it assure them that they are not unsupported, but the ships—as Colonel Molitor said to me at Trieste—are to our opponents a wholesome reminder of “the long arm of Uncle Sam.”

Strategically, the presence of the navy in the Mediterranean assures us that, if we need it, the sea route to Greece and Turkey and Trieste will be open for the dispatch of supplies and reinforcements. Tactically, the carriers of the Fleet might well be our only means, at least in the opening phases of any struggle, for giving direct air support to our own ground forces or those of our allies, and their aircraft are at all times weapons of long reach and powerful striking potential, and therefore a deterrent against ill-considered

military adventure anywhere within their radius of action—a radius which covers the whole Mediterranean hinterland to a depth of several hundred miles. Since the force of naval aircraft thus available can be raised to some five hundred within a few days, and rapidly supplemented by the Air Force via the Azores and Tripoli, the potential of our air striking power in the Mediterranean really amounts to something. And the spearhead of that striking power is the naval aircraft of our carriers.

Some of these things Admiral Sherman and I talked about that day, as the *Rochester* lay in the Grand Canal of Venice; but I would not wish any reader to conclude that the above remarks represent the admiral's views, though he is certainly fully aware of the vital importance of sea power to our position and prospects in the Mediterranean. He is, indeed, one of the ablest officers ever to wear American naval uniform. In his last assignment, as Deputy Chief of Naval Operations for Operations, he was instrumental in working out the details of the National Security Act of 1947, setting up the National Military Establishment. During the late war he served as deputy chief of staff to Admiral Nimitz in the Pacific and later commanded a carrier division.

There was a reception for the Italian admiral aboard the *Rochester* that afternoon. The flagship's band had to practice up on the Argentine national anthem, as well as that of Italy, since the day was the Argentine national holiday (May 25) and the Argentine consul was among the guests. Afterward several officers and I went with the admiral in his barge to a reception at the Argentine consul's house in honor of the day. The coxswain seemed to have no difficulty in finding his way along the canal to the right door. We dined that evening with a Mr. and Mrs. Curtis, who own a beautiful old Venetian house with a "gran galeria" and some truly wonderful paintings.

I spent the night in the admiral's sea cabin, high up under the *Rochester's* bridge. The ship was to sail at 7:00 A.M., and the Italian admiral had kindly consented to send a boat for me so that the flagship would not be delayed by having a boat in the water at too late an hour, and I could still get a reasonable amount of shut-eye.

It seemed very early when the admiral's steward called me for breakfast just the same. We ate to the constant accompaniment of staff officers coming and going with messages, so that the admiral constantly had a sheet of slimsy in one hand and a forkful of scrambled eggs in the other. Then we went on deck, and I said good-by to my friend and went over the side into the waiting boat, which chugged away to Lido airport again where I was to catch the Transadriatica plane for Rome.

Half an hour later I stood on the edge of the pier and watched the *Rochester* stand out to sea, her colors flying bravely and Admiral Sherman's blue three-starred flag snapping jauntily above them.

I watched her until she passed out of sight beyond the island—the symbol of American power and of American responsibility in a war-shattered, war-fearing world. It is a responsibility which you and I and all of us must bear from this time onward, and our children after us, so that the little peoples of this world may live in security and that freedom shall not perish from the earth.

## The Big Picture

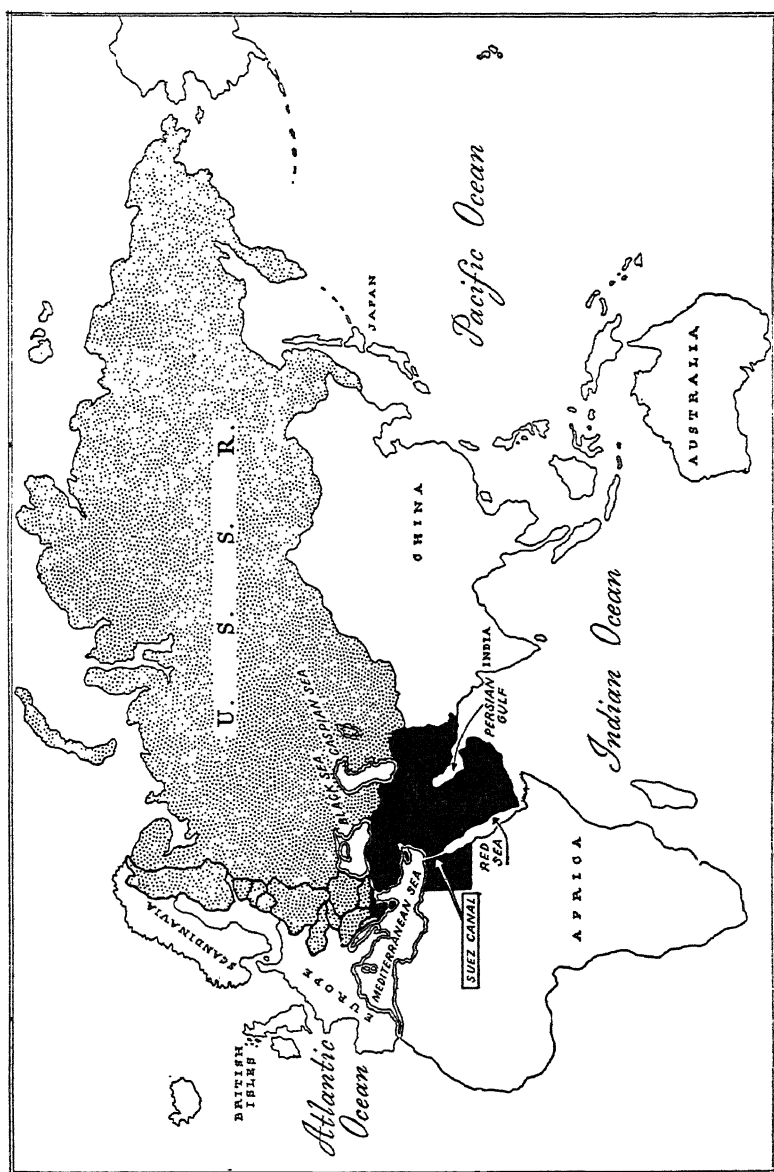
You don't have to read any farther if you don't want to. I've told my story. What I'm going to do in this chapter is strictly think-stuff.

I've told you what I saw and did in the Middle East. I've told you about the people I met there, and what they said to me and how they felt and acted. I've tried to appraise them for you as well as I could. I've told you something of the military and political conditions which form the background for the drama in which these people are the actors. In other words, I've given you the facts, or as many facts as I could gather and could find room to set down in these pages. I've tried to give them to you straight—without, as the juryman's oath has it, "fear, favor or affection."

On the basis of those facts, and of other facts which you can get from many other sources, you can do your own thinking. You should, for the Middle East and what is happening there and what may happen there in the future are of great importance to you and yours.

I wish you'd look at the map on the next page. It's a map of the Old World, or what the geopoliticians call the "World Island." It includes the continents of Europe, Asia and Africa. Eighty-two per cent of the people of the world live in Europe, Asia or Africa. Only eighteen per cent live on the rest of the earth's land surface—that is, North and South America, the British Isles, Australasia and the Pacific Islands.

So any one nation which gets into control of the Old World has the rest of us outnumbered about four and one-half to one, to begin with.





The raw material resources of the world are distributed in comparable proportions. The Old World has more of almost everything—three or four or five times more—than the New World plus the British Isles.

These are the basic facts to keep in mind. They are facts which relate to power and security and peace and to the survival or the destruction of a way of life.

Now look at the Middle East, colored black on the little outline map of the Old World.

It is the region where the three continents come together.

It is the land bridge between them.

No European aggressor, whether Germany of old or Russia now, can march its armies into the oil lands of the Persian Gulf or the vast treasure house of Africa except through the Middle East. Not, at any rate, unless that aggressor also has command of the sea—and command of the sea belongs to America and Britain, without any other possible rival.

Moreover, you can go from Europe to Asia, or vice versa, only by passing through the Middle East—unless you travel wholly in Soviet territory, which is cut off from the inhabited lands of Asia, the Asia that really counts, by barriers of desert and mountain virtually impenetrable to armies and to commerce.

The sea route from the Atlantic to the Indian Ocean passes through the Mediterranean, the Suez Canal and the Red Sea. The air routes which link Europe with India, Ceylon, Burma, Malaya, South China, the Netherlands Indies and Australia are dependent on refueling bases in Palestine, Syria, Egypt and Saudi Arabia.

The Middle East is a mighty crossroads. He who holds that crossroads can forbid the passage of commerce and of military supplies save on his own terms—in peace or in war, by sea or by air.

Finally, under the desert expanses of the Middle East lie

the greatest reserves of petroleum known to man, the black gold, called otherwise (and truly) the lifeblood of modern industry and modern fighting forces.

To paraphrase a geopolitician of the past generation: Who controls the Middle East controls the World Island, and who controls the World Island controls the world.

That is why what is happening and may happen in the Middle East are important to you and yours. That is why you ought to know about it and think about it.

By this time you are looking at the map again, and saying to yourself: "But the Russians are so near, right on the borders of Turkey and Iran and established in the Balkan peninsula. Why don't they just sweep in and *take* the whole Middle East?"

Maybe someday they will try to do just that.

But nearness, in the military sense, is not a matter of distance. It is a matter of time, interpreted in terms of men and tonnage delivered from a source to an operating area, as contrasted with the ability of an opponent to do the like.

Thus in Greece, the guerrillas seemed on the map very near to Bulgaria and Yugoslavia and Albania, their sources of supply. The Greek National Army was thousands of miles away from the United States and Great Britain, which were its sources of supply. Yet as a matter of military nearness, the opposite proved to be the case. American and British supplies could be delivered by sea to the ports of Greece in greater volume than supplies could reach the guerrillas over the hills by muleback from their Balkan confederates. This is because a Liberty ship can carry as much as 60,000 mules can, and can carry it twenty-four times as far in one day's time.

As a matter of fact, most parts of the Middle East are nearer, in this vital military sense, to America and Britain than they are to the Soviet Union.

The Mediterranean Sea is the avenue by which American

and British power may flow with such ease and speed to the Middle East. Its waters are open to the ships of the American and British fleets. Along its shores are the air bases by which air power (U.S. or R.A.F.) can move swiftly into its basin and dominate its hinterland. The two nations control its entrances and exits and, directly or through association with friendly nations, almost the whole of its coast line. The Russians have no establishment of power in the Mediterranean. They have no fleet there and no air bases. Of its shores, since the revolt of Marshal Tito, they control only the short and inaccessible coast of little Albania, and Albania is isolated and far from the support of Uncle Joe. From the point of view of Anglo-American policy, or the policies and hopes of the Western world, the Mediterranean is *mare nostrum*—our sea. Not since the days of the Roman empire have its troubled waters and historic coasts been so completely under the military domination of a single power group, without one formidable rival to be found anywhere within its area.

As long as we and our allies hold the Mediterranean, we can meet any Russian thrust into the Middle East—provided we have made adequate plans and adequate dispositions to do so. Of course, any advantage of position can be thrown away by lethargy or by wishful thinking—what that great soldier General Lord Ismay calls “hoping for the best while failing to prepare for the worst.”

Now that you have studied the map, in connection with the foregoing remarks, it should be clear to you that our political and military policies in the Mediterranean and the Middle East must be all wrapped up together in one compact package. Everything that happens in one part of that area reacts on every other part, to a greater or lesser degree. Maybe in Iran they don't care much about Palestine, for example; but nevertheless the Palestine trouble is precisely what has prevented, so far, the creation and implementation of a sound

workable program of Anglo-American co-operation for the security of the Middle East, on which the safety of Iran may largely depend.

There are many hints which suggest that such a program is at last in the making. The United States came into the Mediterranean in the course of prosecuting the war. As a result of the war America acquired certain temporary responsibilities in Italy and what seem to be at least semipermanent responsibilities in Trieste. These in turn led to the establishment of a permanent U.S. Mediterranean Fleet. Then, as British financial weakness compelled the cutting of her overseas commitments, we found ourselves compelled by the logic of events to undertake the direct support of Greece and Turkey against Russian pressure. Our military arrangements with Iran were the outgrowth of the Soviet attempt to establish Soviet power in that country. Our vast commercial interests in Middle Eastern oil have been expanded step by step with little if any official attempt to relate them to the political situation in the area. Thus our Mediterranean-Middle Eastern commitments have grown up piecemeal, one by one, by necessity or chance, without in any way forming part of a considered, carefully woven pattern.

All this is changing now, changing slowly at first but showing signs of changing more rapidly as the attitude of our people toward further Soviet expansion crystallizes into determined resistance.

Writing this final chapter of my report on the Middle East on July 20, 1948, only a little over five weeks since I returned to the United States, the changes in the situation as it existed at the end of May are already notable.

The state of Israel has come into existence and is an established fact: established more by the strong arms and stout hearts of its young soldiers than by any grace of the great powers or of the United Nations, but established the more

firmly by that very fact. The Arab armies proved no more capable of strangling this sturdy infant in the cradle than I thought they would. Of them all, only King Abdullah's Arab Legion proved to have any fighting quality, and it accomplished little more than the rescue of beleaguered Arabs in the Old City of Jerusalem and the cutting of the road from Jerusalem to the sea, a road since reopened by Jewish arms. Truce has come and gone, and come again in Palestine. This time it has been imposed upon the Arabs by a U.N. threat of sanctions. But it is clear that behind the truce stands the solid force of Anglo-American agreement, at long last, that Israel must be recognized and that the Arabs must bow to that accomplished fact.

King Abdullah, alone of the Arab rulers—save the cautious Ibn Saud—emerges with credit from this debacle of Arab hopes. He has become the first personage in the Arab world, and his dream of Greater Syria is closer than ever to realization. The fact of Arab failure to prevent the establishment of Israel will weaken the position—none too strong before—of the Syrian and Iraqi governments, and this will not fail to be taken account of by Abdullah and his friends in both those countries.

The Arab policy long pursued by the British Foreign Office, and less enthusiastically endorsed by the Colonial Office—a policy with which some people in our own State Department have associated themselves—has been shown, I think, to be based on an illusion.

This illusion is the idea that it is possible to create a durable Arab "buffer" against Soviet incursion. The Arab League was, from the Foreign Office viewpoint, the beginning of an Arab consolidation which would form a real buffer state in the Middle East, backstopping Turkey and Iran and giving meaning and direction to the rising force of Arab

nationalism. But the war in Palestine has made it clear—as British soldiers, in contradistinction to the civilian enthusiasts, have long pointed out—that the Arab countries have no present military potential worth mentioning, and none which can be developed for a long time to come. There is no use having a buffer state which can't defend itself long enough enough for help to reach it. That's no buffer. That's an open road for the invader.

This illusion originated with Lawrence and Clayton (the latter is still influential in Foreign Office circles) and has been carried on with devotion worthy of a sounder premise. To this illusion and its counterpart, the "Holy War" bogey, those who supported this theory were prepared to sacrifice the Jewish state and even risk a serious split in Anglo-American relations. Much of the stubborn reluctance of British Foreign Minister Ernest Bevin to yield to American views regarding Israel can be laid to the fact that he had become convinced that an Arab buffer was necessary to safeguard British interests in the Middle East, and conversely that British support of a Jewish state would lead to an upsurge of anti-Western fury throughout the Moslem world.

But both of these ideas, and especially the buffer idea, presupposes an Arab military potential which Jewish arms have now shown, on a dozen Palestine battlefields, to have no existence in fact. It is this evidence which has at last convinced Mr. Bevin's sturdy British common sense that the policy of the Arab section of his Foreign Office is all wet. To this conclusion, and the Anglo-American agreement on Middle Eastern policy which has resulted from it, the quiet and statesmanlike arguments of U.S. Ambassador Lewis Douglas have contributed in no small degree. The relief of Mr. Loy Henderson as director of the Office of Near Eastern and African Affairs in the State Department brings to an end the regime

which has, in that Department, accepted the Foreign Office illusion and tried to base American policy on its shifting sands.

The trouble with the Arab as a soldier is not lack of personal courage, but rather a complete intractability to discipline. He will follow his chosen chief to the death, but he will not obey the simplest order on the battlefield unless he happens to feel like it—and the moment his immediate superior is out of sight he gets ideas of his own and does what he thinks fit. The Arab is a warrior, but he is not a soldier in the sense that the Turk or the Greek is a soldier. He has a fighting tradition, but he has no military tradition.

Nor is there any sign that the establishment of Israel will lead to a "Holy War" against the West throughout the Moslem world, or even throughout the Arab world.

Hard words have been spoken, and more will be spoken, by Arab statesmen about American and British "perfidy." But these words will be forgotten, before long, as men turn again to the business of living. The fears expressed so often by many students of the Middle East—including some who have missed too many boats—that our policy regarding Israel will kindle fires of eternal hatred against us in Arab hearts will not, in my judgment, be realized. The attitude of the Kings of Transjordan and of Saudi Arabia is I think a better guide to the future. We shall see the pipe line built and the black gold flowing, bringing royalties into royal coffers just as before. Only Abdullah's share will be larger than it used to be.

For the moment, of course, there may be temporary disturbances. This morning's paper tells of an American citizen stoned to death in Cairo. Mobs have lifted the cry "Death to the Jews!" in Cairene bazaars. The Russians will do what they can to fish in these troubled waters. But these things will

pass, for they are little things of no great significance. The issue of Palestine is settled. Israel is a living fact, a fact beyond Arab power to erase from the Book of Destiny.

I can only hope that in these passing turmoils none of the friends who were so kind to me in my journeyings may suffer harm.

In Iran and in Turkey there are new cabinets. In Iran the change is merely of the "caretaker" order. Qavam will come back to power in due time, but that time is not yet. In Turkey the shift marked one more step by President Inonu toward the replacement of the hard-shell old-timers by new men of greater vision and more liberal views.

In Greece the great summer offensive in the Grammos area has passed successfully through its first stage, reached the regrouping pause and is moving forward again. Markos has put out peace feelers. The guerrilla war, as a serious threat to Greek security, seems nearing its end.

And yet—and yet, over all there hangs the shadow of a greater threat, the threat of war between the Soviet Union and the Western world. Men breathed more freely for a little while when Marshal Tito of Yugoslavia found the courage to declare his independence of the Kremlin, however little he may have turned into a friend of the West. But Tito's defiance may mark only his intramural perception of the weaknesses behind the Iron Curtain—weaknesses which in themselves may prove the spur to desperate adventure.

The war clouds hover darkly over Berlin. They may have cleared away by the time these words are published, or they may have thickened and become charged with terrible lightnings. If in ignorance and blind folly those lightnings are loosed upon mankind by the men who sit in the Kremlin, walled away from all contact with reality, the Middle East will surely be an area of battle and the Mediterranean the



avenue by which the power of the United States and her allies will come to save the keystone area of the world from falling into the hands of the Soviet armies.

We cannot afford to see the land bridge between three great continents, the sea gate and the air gate to southern Asia and Africa and the Indian Ocean, the largest reserves of petroleum known to man, fall into the hands of such a conqueror. These are the facts which give the Mediterranean and the Middle East an importance in world affairs—and your affairs—out of all proportion to the numbers of its inhabitants or the area of its territory.

These are the facts which, beside the human story of Jew and Arab, of Turk and Greek and Iranian, seemed to me to justify my writing down, for you to read, the tale of a reporter's journey through those ancient lands which lie at the crossroads of the modern world.

THE END

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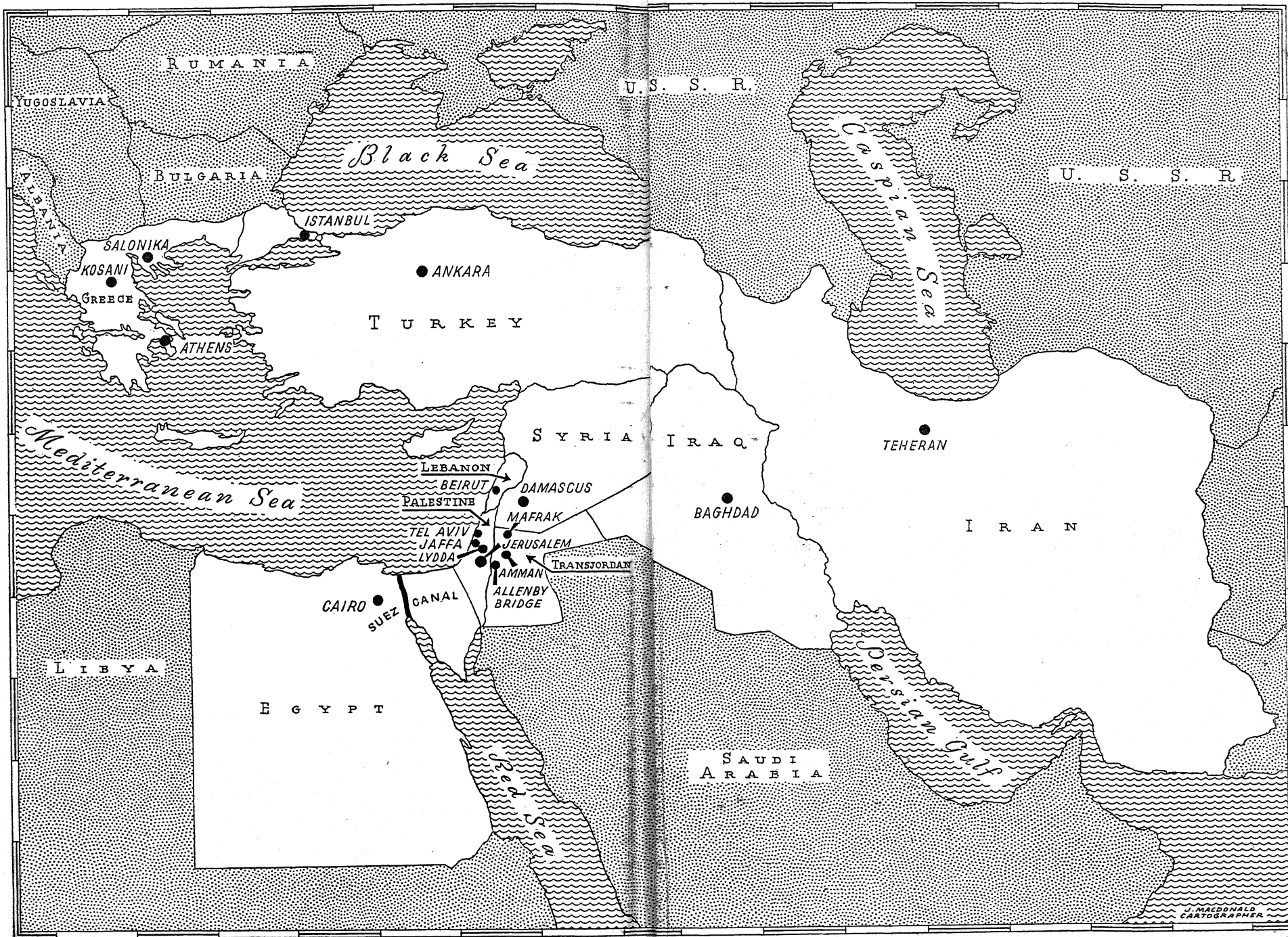












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